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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, September 13, 2004

72 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 278

P18

website: www.inq7.net

Isabela judges take gun training course

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ILAGAN, Isabela—If hanging judges won't stop assassins, maybe pistol-packing judges—and women, at that—will. Concerned about the growing number of murdered court officials, about 50 judges, ISABELA / A21

Sneers greet House move to scrap pork

It's still in budget, says senator

By Christine O. Avendaño

CONTRARY to what they're saying, members of the House of Representatives are not giving up their pork barrel next year despite their "unprecedented twin decisions" to help government deal with its fiscal problems, a high-ranking Senate official said yesterday.

"They are just revising the system, but the pork barrel is still there," said the Senate official, who did not wish to be identified.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. announced Saturday that he and senior party leaders in the House had agreed to abolish the pork barrel system starting with the proposed 2005 national budget following an all-party caucus last week.

They also said the House had agreed to adopt "line item budgeting" to ensure transparency in the nature and amounts of executive and congressional allocations in next year's budget.

The House leaders then called on President Macapagal-Arroyo and the senators to give up their pork barrel allocations.

Like the Senate official, the League of Provinces of the Philippines is skeptical about reports that House members were giving up their pork starting next year.

The league urged the public to be vigilant to tricks House members might pull to conceal their pork barrel through "congressional insertions."

"We just hope that the funds intended for pork barrel are not tucked in the congressional insertions which are far bigger than the pork barrel," said the league's spokesperson, Gov. Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar.

The Senate official said House members were merely changing the system in the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF), also known as the pork barrel, from a "lump-sum appropriation" to "line item budgeting."

He said that instead of identifying the projects later as had been the practice of lawmakers in their PDAF allocations, the projects would be identified "in advance" or when Congress deliberates on the 2005 budget. This then would be included in the proposed General Appropriations Act of 2005.

"From the way it would appear, the pork barrel is not actually abolished... all the rest

Lawmaker likens fiscal crisis to cancer growth

By Carlito Pablo

WE'RE in the midst of a fiscal crisis, but how bad is it?

"Our financial diagnosis suggests that the country is in advanced stages of fiscal metastasis as shown by the rapid spiral in debt service and debt stock," according to a 31-page paper that explored the anatomy of the fiscal crisis and identified "painful" prescriptions for recovery.

The paper, "Dimensions of the Philippine Fiscal Crisis: A Roadmap to Fiscal Rehabilitation," was authored by Rep. Joey Salceda (Lakas-Kampi, Albay), resident economist of the House of Representatives.

Salceda, chair of the House

committee on economic affairs, said there was a need to "put a sick government into intensive care and radical surgery and insulate the private sector from the contagion via an interest rate shock."

He advised the administration to make "a first strike before its modest electoral mandate gets dissipated by political distractions, especially given our historical fixation with the peripherals."

He said the "crux of the fiscal crisis" was the national government's (NG) debt stock of P3.35 trillion as of the end of 2003 and the total public debt stock of P5.39 trillion as of September, 2003.

LAWMAKER / A21

Tax luxuries of rich, ex-Neda chief urges

By Blanche S. Rivera

HIT THEM where they live.

Concerned about the fiscal crisis facing the government, former Economic Planning Secretary Cielito Habito yesterday challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration to show it meant business by taxing the luxuries of the country's rich families.

"Impose taxes on second or third mansions, condominium units, golf course shares, yachts, private planes and helicopters and other displays of extravagance," Habito said.

The proposal was part of a 10-point strategy for a graft-free Philippines drafted by Habito and officials of the fledgling political party Bangon Pilipinas.

Habito, who also served as director general of the National Economic and Development Authority during the Ramos administration, is now Bangon's vice president for economic affairs.

"The people will support a morally upright government when and if" the Arroyo administration pursues the 10 steps spelled out in the Bangon program, Habito said.

TAX / A20

THE "Tribute in Light" shines over the Manhattan skyline and the Statue of Liberty marking the third anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on Saturday, from the perspective of Jersey City in New Jersey.

9/11 VICTIMS

Grace Alegre-Cua, 40
Accountant, Mitsui Bank
Cesar A. Alvar, 80
Marsh & McLennan Inc.
Marlyn C. Baulista, 46
Accounts payable, Marsh & McLennan Inc.
Cecile M. Cagulola, 55
Assistant vice president of finance, Marsh & McLennan Cos. Inc.
Jocelyn M. de Chavez, 24
Portfolio analyst, Fiduciary Trust International
Benilda P. Domingo, 37
Janitorial, cleaner, ABM Industries
Ramon Grilalvo, 58
Morgan Stanley
Frederick Kuo Jr., 53
Engineer, Washington Group International
Arnold A. Lim, 28
Analyst, Fiduciary Trust International
Manuel L. Lopez, 54
Tax accountant, Marsh & McLennan Cos. Inc.
Carl Allen Peralta, 37
Broker, Cantor Fitzgerald
Rufino Conrado F. (Roy) Santos III, 37
Computer consultant for Guy Carpenter, Accenture
David Marc Sullins, 30
Paramedic, Cabrini Hospital
Hilario Soriano (Larry) Sumaya Jr., 42
Technology manager, Marsh & McLennan Cos. Inc.
Hector Tamayo, 51
Project manager, Vanderbilt Group Inc.
Cynthia Motus Wilson, 53

Pain remains fresh for 9/11 victims' kin

By Rita Villadiego
Contributor

NEW YORK—It's been three years, but Filipino-American Cora Fernandez still sheds tears when she looks at her daughter's photographs.

Judith Fernandez perished during the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. She was 27. Every year since then, from Sept. 3 to 11, her mother has lit a candle and prayed a novena for the repose of her soul at the church in

Little Egg Harbor in New Jersey, where the family resides.

The Fernandezes also continue to attend support group meetings with other 9/11 victims' families. They all seek to heal broken hearts, and there's no telling how much longer they will have to do this.

On Saturday, Cora and kin wore T-shirts imprinted with a photo of Judith and brought flowers to memorial services at Liberty Park and at the World

WIDE REMAINS / A22



A NEW York firefighter kisses the hand of a child as they pay their respects to victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the former twin towers of the World Trade Center.

REUTERS

Children sacrificed as pawns in war on terrorism

By Amando Doronila

THE MOST poignant aspect of the third anniversary of the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York was the tearful recitation of the names of the 2,749 people who died in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack. The ceremony, which took three hours, was shorn of angry political rhetoric.

It refocused the war on terrorism to the common people, who have been the victims of attacks, away from the policy issues that dehumanize the brutality of the war by looking at the bombings—not only in New York but in other parts of the world as well—as a response to state policies by political and

religious militants retaliating against these policies and settling ancient scores festering since the First Crusade of the 11th century.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the cycle of violence has spiraled. But most of the victims have been defenseless, innocent and nonpolitical civilians, including lately children. There have been far fewer casualties among soldiers and combatants in this chain of war than among noncombatants.

The New York attack by Islamic militants was not just their declaration of war against their hated target—the United States. It marked the outbreak of a new type of war, following the end

CHILDREN / A22



Jeepney blinking?
Call cops

By Christian V. Esguerra

A BLINKER flashing atop a jeepney means the driver's in distress; a robbery is in progress. Call the cops.

That's in about two weeks, or before the month's end.

JEOPNEY / A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with rains while the rest of Luzon and Visayas will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Bagla	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Laos	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Laguna	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Palawan	Cloudy with Rains

Fil-Ams urged to give to Bayanihan Fund

By TJ Burgonio

AMBASSADOR Lauro Baja Jr., Philippine Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on Saturday exhorted the Filipino-American community in the United States to "join hands" with their compatriots in Manila and contribute to the Bayanihan Fund to avert the looming fiscal crisis in their native country.

Baja said the fiscal problem "presents a singular opportunity and challenge" to the National Federation of Filipino-American Associations (NaFFAA) to help the Philippines.

"Senators and congressmen have agreed to renounce their pork, or part of it; the executive department has embarked on austerity measures; businessmen have come forward promising to pitch in, and religious organizations have taken notice of the crisis," Baja told the audience at the 6th Empowerment Congress of the NaFFAA in Chicago, Illinois.

"There is something truly wonderful happening back home. I see a resurgence of nationalism, of patriotism, of love of country. The sum total of these collective efforts will not by themselves solve the crisis but anything which comes from the heart and soul symbolizes cooperation, unity and empower-

ment—the vision of NaFFAA," he said.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. had urged individuals and groups to contribute to the Bayanihan Fund to help ease the country's financial problems. He hit up businessmen traveling with President Macapagal-Arroyo during her recent state visit to China for P350 million in contributions.

The Department of Tourism and Metrobank have put up donation boxes in their offices and branches to collect contributions from their employees and clients.

"I therefore call on NaFFAA to support the efforts of our kababayans back home and contribute to the Bayanihan Fund," Baja said in his speech, excerpts of which were e-mailed to reporters covering the foreign affairs beat.

It was not immediately known how the delegates to the conference react-

ed to his appeal.

In his speech, the ambassador also paid tribute to NaFFAA, which he said "has [come] long way" in contributing to the social, political, economic and cultural life of the United States.

"The Filipino-American as you have made [him] to be could be a veritable force for progress and development," he said.

Baja cited, for instance, the organization's efforts to press for the passage of the Veterans Equity Bill, its program for distressed Filipino nationals in various parts of the US, and its drive toward a cultural community with emphasis on identity, education and stewardship in the Filipino-American performing arts.

"It is my vision that your involvement in advocacy and legislative policy initiatives will continue to grow from strength to strength," he said.

"I look forward to the near future when more and more Filipino-Americans will be elected to political leadership positions and that from your ranks emanate a distinctly Filipino-American perspective on current and emerging issues of concern in foreign policy and national priorities," he added.



FOR PRIVATE USE ALSO

It's always been illegal for government employees to use official vehicles for private business and outside of work hours, more so with President Macapagal-Arroyo's call for austerity in government because of the fiscal crisis. Lo and behold, yesterday at noon Inquirer photographer Rudy Esperas spotted the Mitsubishi SUV at right sporting government plate number SFX 108 parked outside the Korea Garden restaurant on Jupiter Street in Makati City.

Bill would bar gov't officials from casinos

By Cynthia D. Balana

A BILL which seeks to ban elected and appointed public officials from patronizing gambling casinos has been filed in the House of Representatives.

House Bill No. 1611, authored by Rep. Roseller Barinaga (NPC, 2nd Dist., Zamboanga del Norte), aims to ban a whole gamut of officials. They include: the President, the Vice President, all Cabinet members and officials of various agencies, military and police officials, officials of government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), senators, congressmen and local officials from governors to barangay tanods.

Also covered in the prohibition are spouses of government officials, Barinaga said.

"A spouse's behavior in public would necessarily reflect on the image of the government official," he explained.

Violators would face six months to one year imprisonment and a fine ranging from P10,000 to P30,000, or both.

Officials and employees of Pagcor-operated establishments would suffer the same punishment if found guilty of allowing officials to enter and play at casinos.

Barinaga said the bill would complement Presidential Decree 1869, which allows the government to operate and run casinos but prohibits public officials and employees from entering and playing in the establishments.

"The law has no teeth because it missed out on the penal provision that would have made the law enforceable and not prone to violation," Barinaga said.

In pushing for the immediate approval of the bill, Barinaga cited South Korea where public officials are banned from playing in casinos and from playing golf.

"In the Philippines, a number of government officials, including military and police officers, are frequent clients of casinos," he said. "This bill would answer the clamor to bring back high ethical standards and morality in government."

Dual citizenship rule to be eased

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU of Immigration may soon modify stringent rules on birth certificates for former Filipinos who wish to regain their Philippine citizenship under the dual citizenship law.

Lawyer Arvin Santos, head of the bureau's task force on dual citizenship, said many applicants born before 1950 in the Philippines could not submit birth certificates authenticated by the National Statistics Office because records of their birth had been destroyed during the World War II.

Also, many who were born in the first few years following the end of the war were not registered due to

absence of registrars and the lack of recording facilities.

Santos said the amended rules, which still needed approval from the Department of Justice, would no longer require an applicant to submit such a certificate and instead would just accept one issued by the local civil registrar of the applicant's town of birth.

The requirement of NSO-authenticated birth certificates was a major hurdle for many dual citizenship applicants, according to Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr.

"There are a good number of expatriates whose applications remain pending because existing rules re-

quire them to submit specific documents which they could not present for reasons which are not their fault," Fernandez said in a statement.

The inter-agency committee on dual citizenship composed of representatives from the immigration bureau, DOJ, NSO and the foreign affairs department agreed to the birth certificate authentication and other changes during a recent meeting.

Fernandez said the amendments were being reviewed by the bureau's team of lawyers before they are forwarded to the DOJ. After approval, the new rules would be published in national newspapers before they could take effect.

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4th 2004 MCLE Lecture Series - October 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2004

[Credit units earned may still be credited to the first compliance period]

Bar Matter No. 850 and its implementing rules provide, among others, that failure to comply with the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) 36-unit requirement at the end of the compliance period shall be a cause for listing a lawyer as a delinquent member and consequently, he shall not be permitted to practice law. To afford lawyers the opportunity to fully comply with the MCLE requirement, we are sponsoring the following Lecture Series:

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Please check your chosen session	AM/PM Session	Date	Subject Classification/Time and MCLE Credit Units (CU)	Lecturer
	AM Session	Oct. 2, 2004	Oral Advocacy - 8-10 am (2CU)	Justice Magdangal M. De Leon
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			Updates in Criminal Law - 1-3 pm (2CU)	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta
			Updates in Constitutional & Election Laws - 3:15 pm - 6:15 pm (3CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong
	AM Session	Oct. 9, 2004	Updates in Remedial Law - 8-10 am (2CU)	Dean Ed Vincent S. Albano
	PM Session	Sat.	Pre-Trial Skills - 10:15 am - 12:15 pm (2CU)	Justice Noel G. Tijam
			Trial Technique - 1-3 pm (2CU)	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval
			International & Domestic Arbitration - 3:15 pm - 6:15 pm (3CU)	Dean Custodio O. Parlane
	AM Session	Oct. 16, 2004	Arbitration Law & Agreements - 8-10 am (2CU)	Prof. Mario E. Valderrama
	PM Session	Sat.	MCLE-Prescribed: Rules on Electronic Evidence - 10:15 am - 12:15 pm (2CU)	Atty. Ivan John E. Uy
			Updates in Legal Ethics - 1-4 pm (3CU)	Justice Hector L. Hofileña
			Updates in Labor Law - 4:15 pm - 6:15 pm (2CU)	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan
	AM Session	Oct. 23, 2004	Legal Writing - 8-10 am (2CU)	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr.
	PM Session	Sat.	MCLE-Prescribed: Law & Economics - 10:15 am - 12:15 pm (2CU)	Prof. Harry L. Roque, Jr.
			Problem Areas in Legal Ethics - 1-4 pm (3CU)	Justice Ruben T. Reyes
			MCLE-Prescribed: Essentials of Forensic Ballistics, Questioned Documents & Fingerprinting - 4:15 pm - 6:15 pm (2CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong

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JDV to push P350-M Asean anti-poverty fund

By Carlito Pablo

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia Jr. left yesterday for Cambodia to push for the approval of his proposed \$350 million Anti-Poverty Fund for member-countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations during the meeting of the Asean Inter-Parliamentary Organization in Phnom Penh.

"The fund has drawn significant support as a practical way of building up the Asean middle class," De Venecia said in a statement. "The fund will not be dispensing dole-outs but will finance the entrepreneurial poor of our urban and rural slums."

De Venecia said that he will "breach the barrier of indecision" regarding the creation of such a fund during the 10th AIPO assembly hosted by Phnom Penh.

Under De Venecia's proposal, the fund will be comprised of contributions from Asean member-states, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Union, the G-8 countries and the United Nations System.

"Micro-entrepreneurs could use loans of as

little as the equivalent of \$500 and \$1,000 to generate jobs, produce services and raise local incomes," De Venecia said.

De Venecia was accompanied by five members of the House of Representatives to the AIPO assembly. The trip was fully financed by the Cambodian parliament.

Before leaving for Cambodia yesterday, De Venecia hosted leaders of major media organizations to initiate efforts at mobilizing the so-called Press Freedom Fund.

This fund aims to provide assistance to journalists who are facing harassment and danger in the line of duty.

De Venecia gave P100,000 during the meeting which is the first tranche of the P1 million "reward money" he earlier committed to help solve the murders of journalists.

De Venecia also asked Rep. Gilbert Remulla (NP, Cavite) to raise another P1 million from members of the House to beef up the Press Freedom Fund.

During the meeting, an industry-wide Quick Reaction Task Force was also set up to provide immediate support to threatened journalists.

Aglipay defends controversial app't

By Christian Y. Esguerra

PHILIPPINE National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay yesterday defended the controversial appointment of a general who was placed on floating status a year ago following the escape of Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi.

"He has the capability," Aglipay told reporters, referring to Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa whom he appointed to head the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

As former CIDG deputy chief and Intelligence Group director, Verzosa was the natural choice for the post, widely considered a "little PNP" because of its regional units scattered nationwide.

Aglipay sniped at those who had been criticizing Verzosa's appointment. "He has suffered (already)," he said. "He had no assignment for one year after the Al-Ghozi fiasco."

Al-Ghozi and two top-level Abu Sayyaf detainees escaped on July 14, 2003, the day Australian Prime Minister John Howard visited the country.

The escape greatly embarrassing the government. Al-Ghozi was killed by a manhunt team three months later.

Even before the fiasco, Verzosa was already considered a top contender to replace then CIDG chief Eduardo Matillano.

Aglipay himself seemed irritated with criticism of his extended term.

He reaches the mandatory retirement age of 56 today. But he won't be leaving until February since President Macapagal-Arroyo gave him a minimum term of six months from his Aug. 23 appointment.

In that brief stint, Aglipay wishes to "regain the faith of the Filipino people in the police."

Early this week, the National Police Commission issued a directive that would make it tough for lazy police personnel to be promoted.

Interior Secretary and concurrent Napolcom chief Angelo Reyes directed Aglipay to review the existing promotion system so only those deserving would be promoted.

Villar wants heads of GOCCs sacked

FIRE them for gross mismanagement.

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. was referring to the heads of financially troubled government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) which had caused the public sector deficit to become bloated.

Villar did not name the GOCC heads he wanted sacked but identified the three GOCCs that had contributed to the fiscal deficit from 2000 to 2002 due to losses and liabilities.

These were National Power Corp. (Napocor), which accounted for 37 percent of the deficit; National Food Authority, 14 percent; and Light Railway Transit Authority (LRTA), 13 percent.

Villar said Napocor's outstanding debt amounted to P1.4 trillion, while that of LRTA was P25 billion.

"The heads of GOCCs must be held accountable for the state firms' financial troubles," the senator, chair of the Senate finance committee, said in a statement. "There is a need to look into the fiscal prudence of our public debts."

Last week, Villar called for an inquiry into the debts and expendi-

tures of the national government, as well as for an audit of the country's total consolidated public sector debt, which includes those of the GOCCs.

Villar said the total debt of the GOCCs reached P2.1 trillion this month, or 40 percent of total public sector debt.

He said the government had been assuming the liabilities of GOCCs. In 2003 alone, the national government assumed P37 billion in liabilities of the GOCCs, pushing the national government debt to P3.3 trillion that year.

From 2000 to 2002, about P428.10 billion or 21.3 percent of the national government debts was due to assumed liabilities and lending to GOCCs.

Villar said that as of May 21 last year, the government had guaranteed the loans of four GOCCs, namely, Napocor (\$6.8 billion), Development Bank of the Philippines (\$2.2 billion), Land Bank of the Philippines (\$654 million) and Philippine National Oil Co.-EDC (\$608M).

Only last week, the government sold \$1 billion in bonds for Napocor. *Christine O. Avendaño*

House sets probe of 'chocolate war'

By Carlito Pablo

THE MULTI-MILLION-PESO "chocolate war" that has spilled out of Duty Free Philippines (DFP) and over to Congress shows no sign of being mopped up.

Yesterday, conflicting parties smeared each other with charges and countercharges in this bitter-sweet contest over concession rights for chocolates and snacks.

The DFP Employees Association said in a statement that the prospect of losing their jobs prompted them to expose the deal wherein DFP transferred its concession to the foreign firm Eastern Duty Free without benefit of a public bidding.

"We view the lack of bidding, the projected losses and other anomalous provisions in the contract with alarm... (We could be) thrown out and start begging in the streets when the questionable contract results in financial hemorrhage for the DFP," the association said.

The employees earlier filed a graft complaint against former Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan and DFP general manager Michael Kho who had approved the deal. The DFP-PEA claimed the deal could mean

losses for the DFP of P336 million a year, or P1.6 billion in five years.

Rep. Eduardo Zialcita (Lakas, Parañaque) blamed Chinese-Filipino businessman William Tieng for starting the alleged smear campaign against DFP.

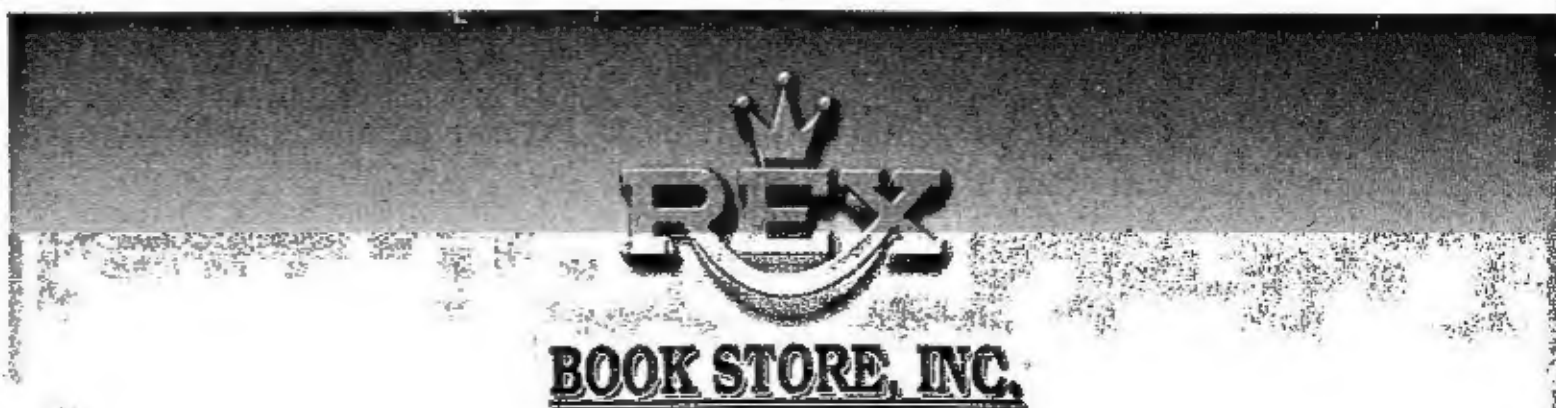
He said Tieng's Winning Touch Corp. had made a counteroffer for the chocolate and snacks concession but failed to bag the contract because EDF "matched (and improved on) the deal by some P180 million."

In a statement yesterday, Zialcita said a joint probe by the House committees on good government and on tourism would be conducted on Tieng's alleged monopoly of contracts at the DFP.

"It would be laughable for Tieng to oppose the chocolate deal because there was no public bidding. All of his deals were negotiated contracts; they never went through public bidding," he said.

Rep. Rolex Suplico (Ind., Batangas) said the management of the DFP and the Philippine Tourism Authority had a lot of explaining to do.

Suplico noted that the deal "virtually gave the foreign firm (EDF) a monopoly over the supply of chocolates and snacks to DFP outlets."

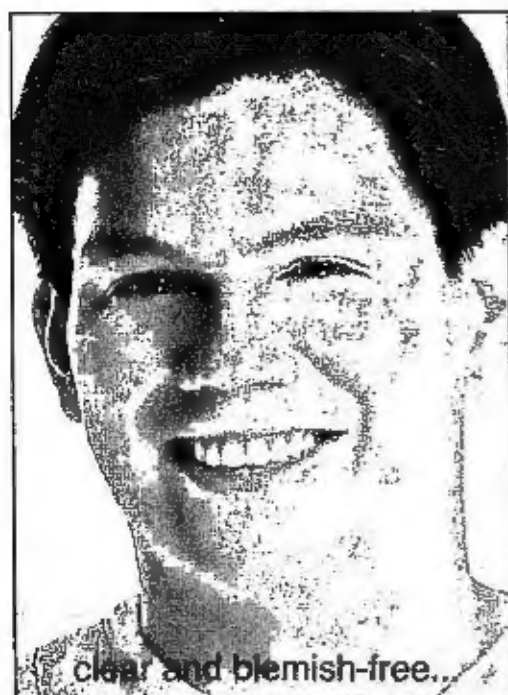


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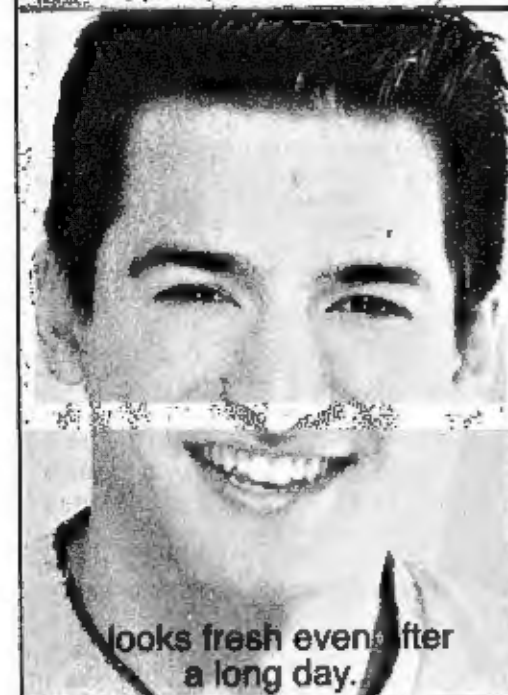
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INVITATION TO BID

Invitation is given to all specialized and accredited bidders to participate in the tender for the supply, delivery and installation of furniture requirements of the Embassy's new Chancery located at 128 H.V. Dela Costa corner Sanchez & Bautista Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

Bid documents may be procured from the Embassy through a non-refundable payment of US DOLLARS FOUR HUNDRED - (US\$400.00). Look for Mr. Al Ayafi.

Sealed Bids shall be submitted to the Embassy together with a bank guarantee equivalent to one percent (1%) of the bid amount on or before October 09, 2004.

Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a Metro story on Page A23—"Body of little angel found on condo's roof"—erroneously reported that a fetus was found on the roof of the 25-story LPL Manor building in Makati City. The fetus was found on the ledge of the building's fifth floor.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, China Rocas Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address: rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

From page A1

end, when public utility jeepneys in Metro Manila will be equipped with the Philippine National Police's latest gadget against thieves.

Director Avelino Razon Jr., National Capital Region Police Office chief, came up with the blinkers proposal following complaints from transport groups about what they said was the worsening problem of jeepney robberies.

"The idea is to give jeepney drivers a tool with which to alert policemen," Razon told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

If he had his way, the official said, he would have every passenger jeepney outfitted with a blinker as a standard device. But drivers who couldn't afford it might try or suggest alternative alarm gadgets, he added.

(Alternative gadgets may also be favored by drivers whose vehicles already sport a hundred blinking lights inside and out. On the other hand, sound alarms will certainly just drown

in, or be mistaken as part of, blaring disco or rock music that's standard in jeepneys servicing mostly student-studded zones. Whatever.)

The NCRPO chief said the main requirement was that the driver should be able to activate the device discreetly and immediately, possibly by just pressing a button.

A driver could even jump the gun on robbers by activating the gadget as soon as one or two persons on board start acting suspiciously, Razon said. He promised that a patrol officer would be readily available to deal with the situation.

In short, the suspected thief will be checked out at once. The official assured the public that policemen would not automatically go for the worst-dressed passenger.

Besides blinkers, the NCRPO will soon implement a "checking system" at vehicle terminals, similar to the one already in place at airports. Officials said transport group representatives may be tapped for the job.

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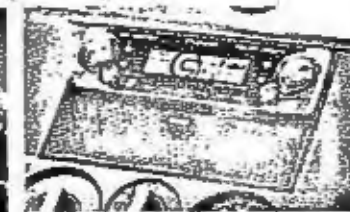
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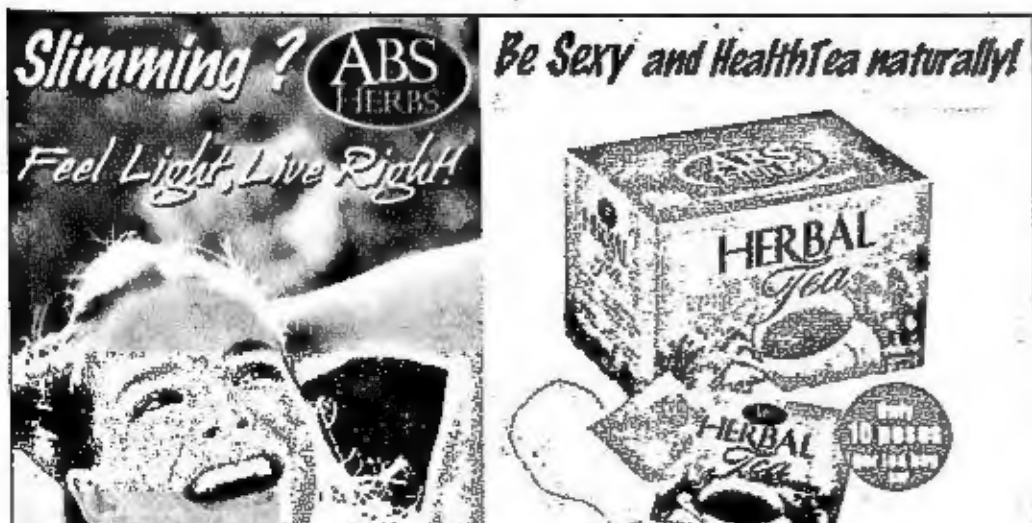
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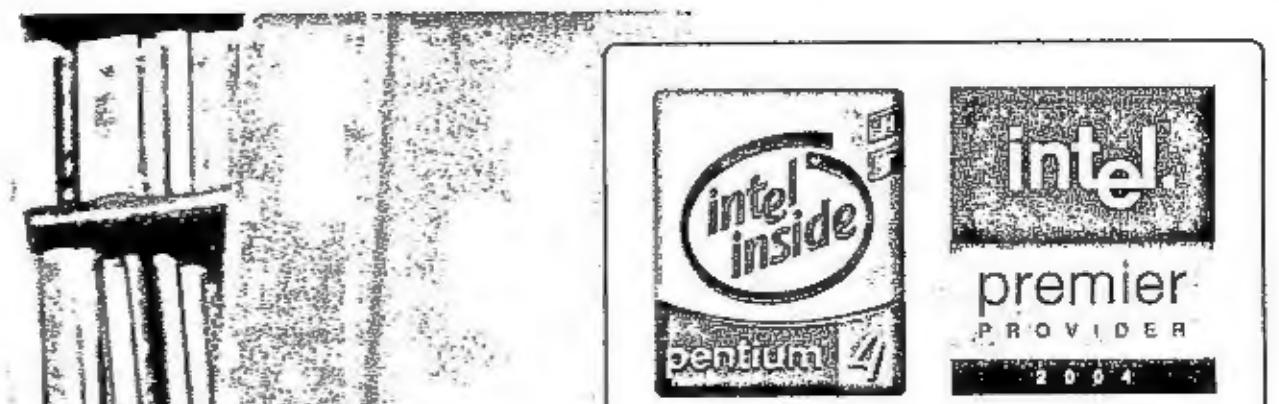
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Taiwan urges restraint on Spratlys issue

By TJ Burgonio

TAIWAN is steering clear of a possible international dispute over an agreement between the Philippines and China to conduct a seismic survey around the disputed Spratly islands to hunt for potential oil and gas reserves.

The head of the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office in Manila has asked all claimant countries to the Spratlys, including Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei, to address the issue through "peaceful negotiations."

"I urge all parties to respect the principle of peaceful negotiations and [adopt] a peaceful resolution to manage the issue, and to respect each other's interest and consent," Teco chief Hsin-hsing Wu said.

Hsin, who had earlier urged the Philippine government to express "verbal support" in the upcoming General Assembly for Taiwan's fresh bid to join the United Nations, declined to comment on Vietnam's criticism of

the agreement.

Vietnam's foreign ministry had accused Manila and Beijing of deviating from a November 2002 agreement between China and the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to avoid any activities that may heighten tensions there.

It also demanded information on the agreement which was hammered out during President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to China early this month.

The "pre-exploration research survey" would entail three years of collection, analysis and processing of seismic data and would cost both the state-owned oil firms of the Philippines and China some \$7 million, officials said.

Gilberto Asuque, spokesperson of the

Department of Foreign Affairs, defended the agreement, stressing that it merely entailed a survey and not an exploration for resources.

Romulo, in a press briefing after Ms. Arroyo's state visit, had said that the seismic survey in some areas of the South China Sea would not encroach on the claims of the countries pushing for their rights in the Spratlys.

The foreign secretary also said the Philippines and China would consult with the other claimants on the seismic undertaking during talks slated later this month "for better understanding."

The Spratlys straddle vital shipping lanes and fishing grounds, and are believed to be sitting on vast oil and gas reserves.

E Timor exec coming to say thanks

By TJ Burgonio

EAST Timor Foreign Minister Jose Ramos-Horta is coming to Manila for a three-day official visit to thank the government for helping the strife-torn former Portuguese colony establish its independence and to seek stronger cooperation on trade.

The 1996 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who is expected to arrive tomorrow, will call on President Macapagal-Arroyo, his Philippine counterpart Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez, Education Secretary Florencio Abad and other officials.

This will be the first official visit by Ramos-Horta, who had visited Manila a number of times but not in his capacity as foreign minister, foreign affairs officials said.

President Fidel V. Ramos had barred independence-advocate Ramos-Horta from attending a conference on East Timor in 1994 and from speaking at a meeting of NGOs during the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Manila in 1996, for fear this would harm relations with Indonesia.

During his visit, Ramos-Horta is expected to witness the signing of a slew of agreements and memoran-

da of understanding on trade, foreign affairs and energy, among others, between East Timor and the Philippines, foreign affairs officials said.

"Minister Horta has informed me that as part of his visit here, he wants to express the East Timorese people's appreciation for our concern and assistance in the establishment of Timor Leste (East Timor) as an independent state," Romulo said.

East Timor became a fully independent republic on May 20, 2002, following approximately two-and-a-half years under the authority of the UN Transitional Administration.

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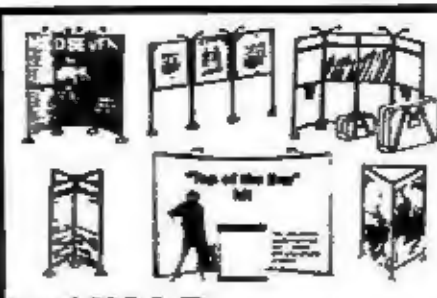
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RP not sending troops to Iraq, DFA assures OIC

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo has assured the Organization of the Islamic Conference that the Philippines was not considering dispatching Filipino troops to Iraq.

Romulo made it clear to the ambassadors and charge d'affaires of the 13 OIC member countries that the government was "not contemplating sending another humanitarian contingent" to the war-torn state, officials said.

The ambassadors and charge d'affaires paid a courtesy call on Romulo at the Department of Foreign Affairs on Friday after his recent appointment as head of the DFA.

Officials under previous DFA chief Delia Albert had said the Philippines was considering sending another humanitarian contingent to Iraq under the aegis of the United Nations. They later took this back.

The Philippines withdrew its 51-man contingent in late July to save the life of Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz who had been seized by Iraqi militants and threatened with beheading.

Romulo affirmed the Philippines' "special relationship" with the OIC member countries, describing it as "warm, strong and productive." He also thanked Malaysia and Brunei for sending monitoring teams to observe the cease-fire between

government troops and separatist rebels in Mindanao and Sulu.

"Because of you, what were once combatants now sit at a table discussing peace," Romulo said.

On behalf of the diplomats, Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam expressed the OIC countries' support for Romulo's leadership at the DFA.

"We are confident of the future knowing the vast experience you have in government service and we hope your leadership will be long-lasting," officials quoted Adam as telling Romulo.

Aside from Adam, those who called on Romulo were Ambassadors Saber Abdel Kader Mansour of Egypt, Jalal Kalantari of Iran, Likhkar Hussain Kazmi of Pakistan, Ibrahim Abdulrahman al-Meghaisse of Qatar, Mohammed Ameen Weli of Saudi Arabia and Ebrahim Abdullah al-Jowaid of the United Arab Emirates.

Charges d'affaires Mohammad Jafar Undin of Bangladesh, Haji Haris Haji Tuah of Brunei, Alexander Laturuw of Indonesia, Salah A.A.M. Al-Bannai of Kuwait, Mahinder Singh of Malaysia and Oyebo Kuku of Nigeria were also present. TJ Burgonio

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SSS offers loan amnesty

MAASIN CITY—The Social Security System will launch next month its third amnesty program aimed at collecting P21 billion in delinquent salary loans from six million employees all over the country.

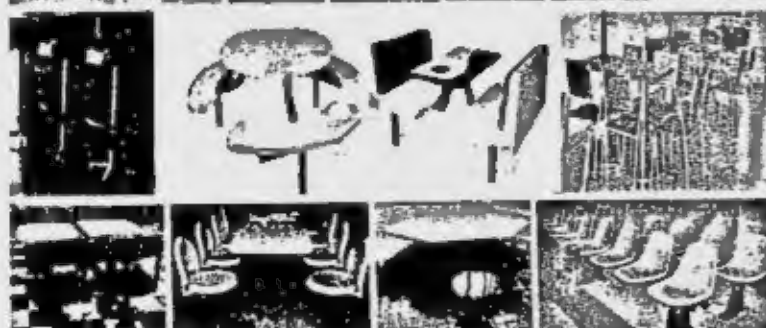
Rodrigo Gregana, SSS manager here, urged members with outstanding loans to avail of the program which would be offered for only one year. "They just need to pay interest and the principal. Penalties will be condoned," Gregana said.

The P21 billion in unremitted payments was accumulated from 1989 to the present. Gregana also de-

fended the planned increase in member contributions saying

it would allow the SSS to provide better service and sustain

its operations. Jani Arnais, PDI Visayas Bureau



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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

25 killed, scores hurt in bloody Baghdad Sunday

BAGHDAD—Militants pounded central Baghdad on Sunday with one of their most intense mortar barrages in the heart of the capital ever. At least 25 people died and more than 100 were injured, including some who were killed when witnesses said an American helicopter fired at a burning US vehicle surrounded by jubilant Iraqis celebrating its destruction.

Elsewhere, a suicide attacker detonated an explosives-packed vehicle just outside Abu Ghraib prison, killing himself but causing no other casualties, the US military said. American guards had fired at the vehicle as it sped toward the front gate, the military said.

A militant group linked to al-Qaida claimed responsibility for the attacks in an Internet statement that could not be immediately verified. The group led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi boasted it held the initiative in the Iraqi insurgency and possessed the "ca-

pability to surprise the enemy and hit its strategic installations at the right time and place."

Rockets and mortar began raining down before dawn on the Green Zone, which houses Iraqi and US offices, and other parts of central Baghdad. As the shelling continued after sunrise, US troops backed by armored vehicles moved into the streets searching for the attackers.

A Bradley fighting vehicle rushing down Haifa Street to assist a US patrol was disabled by a car bomb shortly before 7 a.m.,

the US military said. An Associated Press reporter at the scene, however, did not see any other vehicle in the immediate vicinity of the burning Bradley.

The four US crewmen escaped with minor injuries but came under small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire and called for air support, US officials said.

Jubilant fighters and young boys swarmed around the burning vehicle, dancing, cheering and hurling firebombs. Several young men placed a black banner of the al-Qaida-backed group

Tawhid and Jihad, led by al-Zarqawi, in the barrel of the Bradley's main gun.

Suddenly, a US Kiowa helicopter fired on the Bradley, trying to destroy it to prevent insurgents from looting weapons and ammunition on board, the military said.

Witnesses said several people milling around the Bradley, including a correspondent for the Arabic language Al-Arabiya television station, were killed. An Iraqi cameraman working for Reuters and a freelance photographer for Getty Images were also wounded.

Al-Arabiya broadcast videotape showing its employee, Mazen "al-Tuneizi, preparing to make a report. Suddenly, an explosion occurred behind him. He doubled over and began screaming "I'm dying, I'm dying," and colleagues tried to help him.

Health Ministry official Saad al-Amili said 13 people were killed and 61 wounded on Haifa Street. Scattered shoes, pools of fresh blood and debris littered the scene.

Another 12 people died and 41 were injured Sunday in other violence across the city, al-Amili said.

US intel officer jailed for Iraqi prisoner abuse

BAGHDAD—A twice-decorated US military intelligence officer was jailed for eight months and discharged for bad conduct Saturday for abusing Iraqi prisoners, as US troops in Iraq marked the third anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Specialist Armin J. Cruz, 24, of Plano, Texas, pleaded guilty at the start of his special court martial in Baghdad, but the military judge did not deliver his verdict until Saturday afternoon.

"He has been sentenced to reduction to private, confinement for eight months and a bad-conduct discharge. His confinement location has not yet been determined," said military spokesperson Lt. Col. Steven Boylan.

Cruz, attached to the 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion, had pleaded guilty to ordering soldiers to undress, handcuffing them and forcing them to crawl so their genitals scraped the floor, according to the military's charge sheet.

He also confessed to conspiring with military police to cover up the abuse.

A spokesperson said Cruz, who joined the army in September 2000, had indicated he would appeal the sentence. He had faced a maximum punishment of up to a year in jail, demotion to private, a fine of two-thirds of his salary and a bad-conduct discharge.

The abuses at Abu Ghraib prison that saw Iraqi detainees beaten and sexually humiliated have been linked to new "get-tough" interrogation methods issued by the Pentagon in the aftermath of Sept. 11.

Initially, the White House insisted that sexual and physical mistreatment at Abu Ghraib, which rights groups have said amounted to torture, was limited to the seven military police prison guards who were the first to be charged.

Twenty-seven military intelligence personnel have now been recommended for indictment and US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said at least 45 people would face court martial.

The scandal has tarred the US reputation and proved a major hurdle in the war on terror, providing a propaganda victory for the al-Qaida network that carried out the attacks three years ago. **AFP**

Huge explosion rocks N. Korean province—report

SEOUL—A large explosion occurred in the northern part of North Korea, sending a huge column of smoke into the air on an important anniversary of the communist regime, a South Korean news agency reported Sunday.

The South Korean government said it was trying to confirm the report of an explosion at 11 a.m. on Thursday in Yanggang province near the border with China.

The Yonhap news agency carried conflicting reports from unidentified sources, with one in Washington saying the incident could be related to a natural disaster such as a forest fire. It also cited a diplomatic source in Seoul as raising the possibility of an accident or a nuclear test.

Yonhap later quoted Kim Jong-min, spokesperson for the presidential office, as saying:

"Currently, we are trying to find out in detail the exact character, cause and size of the accident, but we don't think North Korea conducted a nuclear test."

Although North Korea is believed to be developing nuclear weapons, international experts would likely have been able to detect the test if one had occurred several days ago.

"We understand that a mushroom-shaped cloud about 3.5- to 4-km in diameter was monitored during the explosion," the source in Seoul told Yonhap. Yonhap described the source as "reliable."

Thursday was the anniversary of North Korea's founding on Sept. 9, 1948. Leader Kim Jong-il uses the occasion to stage performances and other events to bolster loyalty among the impoverished North Korean population. **AP**

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HK polls seen to give more clout to pro-democracy opposition

HONG KONG—Hong Kong people voted Sunday in legislative elections, turning out solidly for contests expected to hand pro-democracy opposition figures more clout than any time since China reclaimed the territory in July 1997.

The campaign had been marred by scandal and alleged intimidation, and many voters were venting anger at Beijing's recent decision ruling out full democracy in the near term.

Pro-democracy opposition candidates, viewed as troublemakers or even "traitors" by China, were projected to gain the most votes but fall short of a majority in the Legislative Council under an election system critics say is rigged.

Half of the 60 seats were directly elected, with 3.2 million people eligible to vote, while the other half were picked by less than 200,000 members of special interest groups such as business, law and accounting that tend to back Beijing.

"I hope Hong Kong can be more democratic," said Candy Chu, a 48-year-old arts and crafts teacher who marched in two massive protests that shifted the landscape of local politics. Chu backed the opposition and accused the other side of "just speaking for Beijing."

Polls were to stay open for 15 hours, with final results expected Monday morning. By mid-afternoon, turnout for the directly elected seats had hit 23.26 percent, well ahead of that point in the 2000 election.

Candidates fanned out in last-minute appeals for votes. Some paraded through restaurants, TV news cameras close behind, to seek support from locals eating lunches of dim sum—small Cantonese delicacies. AP

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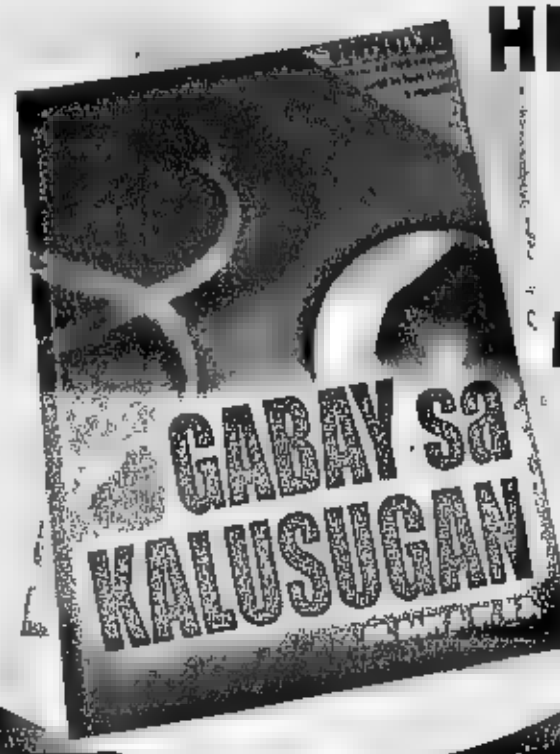


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Indon police warn of more suicide attacks

JAKARTA—Indonesian police warned Sunday of more suicide attacks after a truck bomb killed nine people and wounded more than 170 in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

"There are many suicide bombers still out there," said a top police official, who refused to be named. "There is the possibility of another attack, but it's difficult to predict where they will strike."

Police said they were searching for two suspected masterminds of Thursday's embassy attack who are still believed to be in Jakarta.

The men are believed to be Malaysians Azahari bin Husin and Noordin Top, who police allege are bomb-makers and key members of the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah terror group, which has been blamed for the attack.

Investigators Sunday reenacted the bombing at the blast site, a routine practice in criminal investiga-

tions here. In the bombing, a white delivery van—seen in security camera footage—swerved past a police truck outside the heavily fortified embassy and then exploded.

On Saturday, police said they recovered traces of TNT and sulfur—chemicals used in the embassy bomb—from a Jakarta house rented in July by Azahari and Noordin Top. The man who sold the white van was also being interrogated.

"We are still facing a terrorist threat, especially from Azahari and Noordin Top," said Police Chief Gen. Dai Bachtiar. "We are hunting them down."

Newspapers quoted neighbors as saying four men had rented the house for five days and were seen loading boxes into a pickup truck. They reportedly kept to themselves, venturing out only to pray at a nearby mosque.

Interrogations of six would-be suicide bombers arrested in late June revealed the pair had recruited militants to launch attacks on

Western targets including hotels, banks and embassies, Bachtiar said.

The motive behind Thursday's bombing remains unclear. An Islamic website posted a message claiming Jemaah Islamiyah was responsible, and said the attack was aimed at Australia, who supported the US-led war in Iraq.

Security has been stepped up in Jakarta, with embassies adding guards and barriers, and closing some roads.

The Australian Embassy warned that more attacks "could not be ruled out," and urged Australians to avoid the area around the mission, including the massive Rasuna apartments where a number of Westerners live. The US Embassy e-mailed similar warnings to Americans.

"We've received reports by Americans that there are further threats in that area," Australian Ambassador David Ritchie told reporters. "I would urge residents of that complex to take appropriate action, and that could well involve leaving." AP



INDONESIAN forensic experts reenact one of the events leading up to Thursday's bombing outside Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

Police reconstruct events in Aussie Embassy blast

JAKARTA—Indonesian police Sunday staged a reconstruction of events leading up to a deadly suicide bomb attack on the Australian Embassy in Jakarta as an intense manhunt continued for extremists believed to be planning a second attack.

A small white van identical to the vehicle used to deliver the blast that killed nine people and injured about 180 in Thursday's attack, was placed in front of the embassy in the hope of shedding more light on the investigation.

Meanwhile, police have redoubled efforts to track down suspected members of the Jemaah Islamiyah group believed to be behind the embassy strike. It is feared they are recruiting for a follow-up attack on the Indonesian capital.

Thursday's blast, ahead of elections in Australia and Indonesia, has purportedly been claimed by Jemaah Islamiyah—blamed for the October 2002 Bali bombings—as a warning to Canberra to pull troops out of Iraq.

Australia has announced heavy security measures in response to the threat, while potential targets including Western embassies, hotels, commercial centres and transport hubs around Jakarta have been placed on high alert.

Police hoped the reconstruction using the white van would help them determine how the vehicle was blown apart, giving new clues on the assembly of the bomb, suspected to be the work of fugitive Malaysian extremists. AFP

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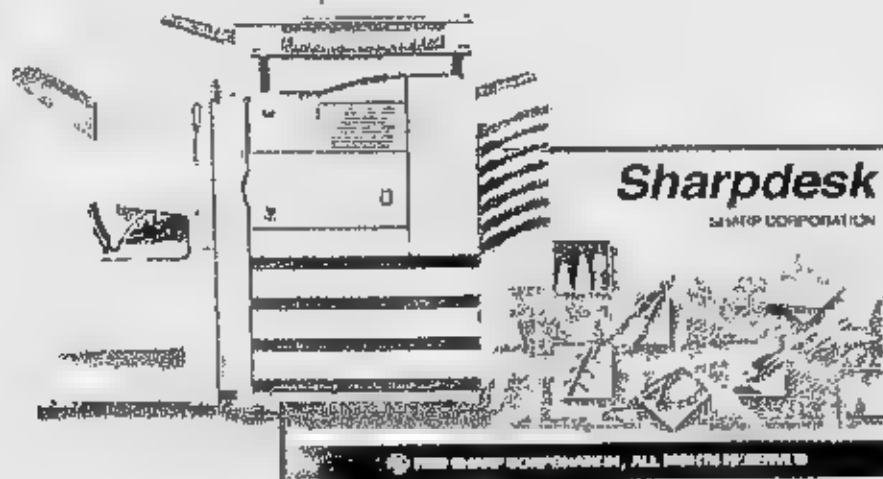
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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, September 13, 2004
24th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gospel, Lk 7:1-10 1 Cor 11:17-26, 33

When Jesus had finished teaching to the people, he went to Capernaum.

There was a captain whose servant was very sick and near to death, a man very dear to him. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent some elders of the Jews to persuade him to come and save his servant's life. The elders came to Jesus and begged him earnestly, saying "He deserves this of you, for he loves our people and even built a synagogue for us."

Jesus went with them. He was not far from the house when the captain sent friends to give this message, "Sir, do not trouble yourself for I am not worthy to welcome you under my roof. You see I didn't approach you myself. Just give the order and my servant will be healed. For I myself, a junior officer, give orders to my soldiers and I say to this one: 'Go,' and he goes; and to the other: 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant: 'Do this,' and he does it."

On hearing these words, Jesus was filled with admiration. He turned and said to the people with him, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith." The people sent by the captain went back to his house; there they found that the servant was well.

Commentary

THE "captains" of this translation are the "centurions" of other translations. As the name implies, they were the officers in command of 100 foot-soldiers. In a Roman legion there would be 60 centurions in charge of 6,000 men. In the time of Jesus there were two such legions in Palestine. These 120 men left an entirely favorable impression, according to the gospels—strange for an occupying army! The one in today's reading left more than a good impression, "he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us."

This centurion was also particularly sensitive to Jewish custom. He knew that Jews would not allow Gentiles to enter their houses, nor would they enter the house of a Gentile, so he sent messengers to Jesus. When Jesus came near the house, the centurion said, "Sir, I am not worthy to receive you in my house..." (The centurion Cornelius in Acts 10 also written by Luke had the same sensitivity, "When Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him.") And still he thought like an army man, in terms of orders being carried out. "I say 'Go!' and he goes! And he thought that Jesus could just issue an order to the sickness and it would just go, like an army private!

Which goes to show that an army man doesn't have to give his soul to the army, he can be a human being at the same time. Saint's famous illustration of "bad faith" was an army man who had become an army man body and soul, someone who had found his complete identity in being a soldier. Those New Testament centurions, pagans though they were, have much to teach us about work and humanity.

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Arabs accuse US of spreading terrorism threat

CAIRO—Victims of the Sept. 11 attacks were mourned worldwide Saturday, but in the Middle East, Arabs said Washington's support for Israel and the war on terror that began in the aftermath of the World Trade Center's collapse only fueled anger and violence.

From Egypt to Yemen, Arabs said the world had become less safe during the three years since 19 militants from the Middle East

hijacked four passenger planes in the United States and used them to kill nearly 3,000 people.

"Sept. 11 was a tragic day in our history because so many innocent people were killed at the hands of militants, who find a fertile ground in our region in view of the biased US policies toward Israel and against Arab causes," said 34-year-old banker Mahmoud Obeid in the Jordanian

capital, Amman.

Arabs have long blamed US policies in the Middle East, including Washington's support for Israel in its conflict with the Palestinians, for fomenting the kind of anti-American hatred that could drive people to launch an attack of the magnitude of Sept. 11, 2001, in New York and Washington D.C.

Egyptian columnist Fahmy

Howeidy called for critical self analysis from people in the Middle East and Islamic worlds "because those people who committed the Sept. 11 attacks ... were (also) Muslims and Arabs."

"But ... the problem is the Americans don't want to criticize themselves," he told The Associated Press. "They don't look at their policies and mistakes, like the US position toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By defending the terrorism committed by Israel against the Palestinians, they are filling people with anger."

The archbishop of Canterbury, in Egypt to help mend religious rifts, urged Muslims, Christians and Jews to move beyond "the way the faithless world thinks" and reject violent revenge, terror and the killing of innocents.

"If we do act in the same way as our enemies, we imprison ourselves in their anger, their evil," Rowan Williams said during a speech to religious leaders at a top Sunni Muslim center in Cairo.

"We are not forced to act in revengeful ways," added Williams, who was in New York when al-Qaida militants slammed hijacked planes into the World Trade Center's twin towers three years ago.

AP

Greek Orthodox leader dies in helicopter crash

Hurricane kills at least 56 in Caribbean

ATHENS—The Patriarch of Alexandria, Peter VII, one of the most senior figures in the Greek Orthodox Church, was killed on Saturday along with 16 others in a helicopter crash in the Aegean Sea, church and government officials said.

The patriarch, the spiritual leader of Greek Orthodox Christians in Africa, was heading to the Mount Athos monastery in northern Greece, one of the holiest sites in Orthodox Christianity, in an army helicopter when the aircraft disappeared from radar screens.

Military ships and planes launched a rescue operation and found wreckage and bodies in the water 5.5 nautical miles off the Halkidiki peninsula where Mount Athos is located.

Government spokesperson Theodore Rousopoulos said the helicopter had delayed its landing on Mount Athos because the patriarch had asked to first be flown over the site.

Seven bodies had been recovered by late Saturday, but none had so far been officially identified, the military said. A military source said the crash was almost certainly accidental in nature, but that its cause was still unknown.

The Greek government confirmed the death of the 55-year-old patriarch, who was the second most senior figure in the Greek Orthodox Church.

Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis expressed his "deep pain" at the death and said the crash was a "great loss for the Orthodox church, Hellenism, and the armed forces." Monsignor Christodoulos, head of the Greek Orthodox Church, spoke of his "great pain" following the accident, which took place about two hours into the flight to Mount Athos.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan was saddened to learn of the death and sent his condolences to the families of the crash victims and to the Greek Orthodox community, his spokesperson said.

Sixteen other people were on board the Greek army Chinook helicopter: the patriarch's brother, several Alexandrian and other Orthodox clerics, and five crew members.

An Australian, Bishop Nektarios of Madagascar, was among the dead, the foreign ministry said.

Greek Defense Minister Spiros Spiropoulos said rescuers were still recovering bodies from the sea among the helicopter debris. A ship specialized in underwater searches would arrive at the crash site on Sunday, he added.

AFP

BULL BAY, Jamaica—Hurricane Ivan weakened slightly Sunday after it left behind a trail of destruction in Jamaica and bore down on the Cayman Islands packing winds close to 249 kph, the US National Hurricane Center said.

Ivan has killed 56 people across the Caribbean so far this week, including 34 in Grenada and 11 in Jamaica.

Millions more people are in its path, with the Category 4 hurricane projected to go between the Cayman Islands, make a direct hit on Cuba and then either move into the Gulf of Mexico or hit South Florida.

"If God doesn't help us, I think this is going to be extremely tragic," said Maria del Carmen Boza, a 65-year-old resident of Cojimar, a seaside community in Cuba once frequented by writer Ernest Hemingway. "All of Cuba is worried. This looks like it's going to be really dangerous."

President Fidel Castro sought to assuage such concerns.

"This country is prepared to face this hurricane," Castro said Saturday night on state television, saying his government had mobilized to save lives and property.

Ivan weakened slightly early Sunday as maximum sustained winds decreased from 265 kph to near 249 kph, just below the speed defining a Category 5 hurricane—the most powerful on the Saffir-Simpson scale. But

forecasters said fluctuations in strength were "likely" over the next 24 hours and warned that the storm could again intensify from Category 4 to Category 5.

At 5 a.m. EDT Sunday (0900 GMT), Ivan's eye was about 90 km south-southeast of Grand Cayman, a popular offshore banking center where secrecy laws protect transactions. Hurricane-force winds extended 150 km and tropical storm force winds another 282 km. The storm was moving west-northwest near 15 kph and was expected to move over or very near the Cayman Islands by Sunday afternoon.

The storm could dump up to 30 cm of rain, possibly causing flash floods and mud slides, the Hurricane Center said.

If Ivan hits land in the Caribbean at its current strength, it would be the first Category 5 storm to do so since Hurricane David devastated the Dominican Republic in 1979, said Rafael Mojica, a meteorologist at the Hurricane Center in Miami.

Hurricane Mitch was a Category 5 storm in the Caribbean Sea in 1998, but it hit Central America.

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Booby-trapped cars

THE CAR bomb that exploded outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta last Thursday was not the first to target Australians. Sadly, it won't be the last.

The Jemaah Islamiyah posting that claimed responsibility for the bombing spoke of more attacks against Australian targets in the future. "This is only the first reply of many replies that are coming, God willing, which is why we advise all Australians in Indonesia to leave it or else we will make it their graveyard, God willing."

EDITORIALS

The message (an edited version can be found on www.theaustralian.news.com.au) suggested more "martyrdom operations" in graphic terms: "The columns of booby-trapped cars will not end and the lists of martyrs are still full and will not end."

The JI claim justified the attack, which killed nine Indonesians and injured 180 others, as retaliation for Australia's participation in the invasion and occupation of Iraq, but an SMS message received by the Indonesian police some 45 minutes before the bombing gave another reason: the group wanted its leader, the cleric Abu Bakar Bashir, freed from jail.

There is no reason to doubt that both justifications are equally relevant; that is to say, that each, by itself, explains the latest act of terror. The Jemaah Islamiyah—the deadly al-Qaida-linked group that seeks to establish a pan-Islamic fundamentalist state in Southeast Asia through whatever means—sees the US-led occupation of Iraq as an attack on Islam itself, at least as the group understands it. The detention of Bashir, their spiritual leader, is another such provocation; for all practical purposes, he is already a martyr, inspiring more martyrs.

To be sure, many of the top leaders of the JI, as in the case of al-Qaida itself, have been arrested or killed. But, also like al-Qaida, the JI is a movement of martyrs that replenishes itself on the blood of its suicide bombers. JI's loose network of schools and camps and safehouses, some of which are reportedly based in parts of Mindanao, continues to gather more recruits and produce more holy warriors. As last week's bomb attack proved, the JI may be on the run, but it remains a potent threat.

It is for this very reason that many in Canberra criticized Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer for bad-mouthing the Philippines last July, after Malacañang's decision to withdraw the Philippine contingent from Iraq. The two countries are both victims of JI violence, and they need to continue cooperating closely. Undiplomatic language only gets in the way.

But collaborative police and intelligence work is only half the story. It isn't enough to catch the martyrs before the bomb is lit; the allies in the international war on terror must work together to root out the causes that lead to the making of martyrs in the first place.

In a larger war

ACTS of terrorism are skirmishes in a larger war; they are battles in the war of ideas and images. There is deliberate symbolism in the timing of the Jakarta attack, just days before the third anniversary of the September 11 strike. (The Bali bombing, which killed 202 victims, including 88 Australian citizens and three Australian residents, was another such symbolic battle; it took place a year, a month, and a day after the first anniversary of 9/11.)

But there is also an element of political calculation. The Australian federal elections will be held a month from now, and Australia's role in the so-called Coalition of the Willing is a critical election issue. The al-Qaida railway bombings in Madrid last March led directly to the ouster of Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's pro-United States government. The Jakarta bombing seeks to do the same: to roil the political waters, to start a wave of sympathy and revulsion and outrage strong enough to sweep Australian Prime Minister John Howard's government out of power.

What does all this mean? Terrorists have grown more cunning. They now have a better feel for where the democracies are most vulnerable: in the very political exercise that marks them as democratic—the conduct of elections. Through well-timed acts of terror, they now seek to decide the outcome of the vote.



Nobody to blame but GMA for fiscal crisis

EVERY DAY, public officials become more inventive in stealing more money from the people. And officials of the Arroyo administration are more inventive than the others. Instead of using their talent to think of better ways to serve the country and the people, they use it to think of new ways to enrich themselves at the expense of the people. Here is the latest:

The Department of Transportation and Communication paid P100.8 million to a person for 10 hectares of land to be used for the extension of the airport in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. What's wrong with that?

Nothing, except that the government paid for the land that it already owns. The land is part of the public domain. And its description clearly says that. The person who sold and signed the absolute deed of sale does not own the land. Yet government paid him P100.8 million for it.

In fairness to the present DOTC secretary, this scam was consummated by a predecessor. The money had been paid but the Arroyo administration, which admits that it is running out of money and keeps repeating that it will stop graft and corruption, has not done anything to get back the money nor prosecute those involved in the scam. More details will be revealed in today's Kapihan sa Manila.

The Puerto Princesa deal is only the first of six similar deals lined up by the DOTC. The lands to be acquired will be used either for new airports or to expand existing ones. Luckily, the others have not yet been consummated when the first one was discovered. But it shows very clearly why the government is bankrupt—the money is going to the wrong pockets.

"Don't blame President Macapagal-Arroyo for the hard times," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye was quoted as saying yesterday after the Social Weather Stations came out with its most recent survey showing a huge drop in her net performance rating.

The results showed her net performance rating plunging from +30 in March and +26 in June to a mere +12 in August. This means that more and more people are dissatisfied with her performance.

I REMEMBER that Bobi Tiglaio dismissed the Ibon version of that finding by saying the group never published its methodology. As though the other survey organizations—Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia in particular—did. But comes now the SWS corroborating Ibon's finding.

Most Filipinos believe Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo won the elections by cheating.

Specifically, 23 percent of SWS' respondents said they believed Fernando Poe Jr. and Loren Legarda were "definitely cheated" and 32 percent said they believed the two were "probably cheated." That makes 55 percent of the population believing GMA (and Noli de Castro) cheated in the elections, to the extent that the SWS' sample represents the population reasonably accurately.

The SWS itself admitted a couple of months or so ago to making some very wrong predictions about the elections, which is at least a B+ for honesty. Those mistakes, of course, are more than a matter of passing academic interest since pre-election surveys do more than just predict outcomes, they influence them. Surveys have become the biggest advertising gimmick for candidates, something that's bound to get worse in the future. Some rules are needed there. But that's another story.

Ignacio Bunye bristles at this revelation and says: "The polls on cheating are a throwback to the past. The Presidential Electoral Tribunal has already taken jurisdiction over the issues. We have to shed off these perceptions and get on with the difficult task at hand."

Pray, why is ferreting out the public's perception about whether we have the right president or not a thing of the past? Unless, of course, Bunye means to suggest that honesty or the search for the truth is now dead and buried. He himself says we face a difficult task at hand, which is dealing with an impending collapse of the economy. Now surely, it helps in facing a difficult task at hand that we know we have the president we voted for? Indeed, surely it helps in facing the wilderness that we know the person who is leading us out of it is

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz



But leave it to Bunye to always see the bright side. "The economic problems may have weighed down her ratings," he said, "but a positive 12 percent still showed solid acceptance for the President." Bunye is the kind of person who, instead of seeing a glass half-empty, he sees it half-full.

But this takes the cake. The economic crisis "should not be blamed on the President," he said, "because all that (she) did was to tell the truth about our situation and she is looking for a solution to this crisis."

False. But to be fair to him, I think he is just doing his job as best as he can—which is to try to put his boss in the best possible light.

But he is wrong. In the first place, GMA did not tell the whole truth about what happened. In the second place, there is nobody to blame for the economic crisis but herself. The usual excuse of new presidents is to blame their predecessors. But in her case, she preceded herself. The mess worsened in her first three years because of her all-consuming desire to be reelected to a new term—although she had promised not to run for reelection.

She ordered the National Power Corp. to cut its purchased power adjustment (PPA) by 85 centavos per kilowatt hour to make herself popular with the voters, never mind if the reduction entailed huge losses to the power firm. Now we are paying for those huge losses. Because of that electioneering gimmick, Napocor's debts ballooned to P1.3 trillion, the government's single biggest liability.

Now that the elections are over and she does not need votes anymore, she is hitting the people with a double whammy. Aside

from making the taxpayers pay for Napocor's debts, she raised Napocor's power rates. In short, while paying for higher electricity rates from one pocket, the taxpayer will have to dig into the other pocket to pay for Napocor's accumulated debts.

During her first term, she refused to raise taxes to pay for the growing budget deficit and national debt because that would have been unpopular. She resorted to a borrowing binge instead and hid the truth from the people. In her first three years as President, she borrowed more money than her two predecessors did put together. Now her sins have caught up with us.

Now that she has been reelected and can no longer run for another term, she is going to raise taxes and impose new ones. Never mind if the already impoverished people will be angry. After all, she does not need their votes anymore. Instead of saving money by abolishing the corrupt and wasteful pork barrel and by reducing the salaries and allowances of officials of government corporations that are losing money like a sieve, she would rather hit the people with more taxes.

That is the truth about what happened which she did not tell the people. There is nobody to blame for the economic crisis but GMA. She brought it on herself more than any other person.

The gossip mill is humming with the interesting story about the motel magnate and GMA-appointed ambassador whose former live-in partner had charged him with rape, attempted murder and serious illegal detention. Some stories say he has been convicted; others say he has been cleared. I have been asked many times about it—as if journalists know everything.

To find out the truth, I went to the Department of Justice to look at the records of the case, and I now return with good news for Ambassador to Laos Antonio Cabangon Chua and bad news for his partner: the DOJ has dismissed all cases. Furthermore, the charges filed with the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission have been dismissed by Malacañang.

'Necessary evil'

THERE'S THE RUB

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not chronically given to lying and cheating?

I myself have no doubt GMA cheated in the elections. That is patent. The only question in my mind is the extent to which it affected the elections. That is the only thing that remains arguable. But the fact that she cheated in them must make the entire exercise suspect, with disastrous consequences for the future.

You do not have to dig deeply for signs of cheating, the thing was done barefacedly. Four of them easily leap to mind: Benjamin Abalos (he didn't just bungle the mandate to computerize canvassing through ineptitude, he did so through criminal complicity, yet he was retained); the use of government funds to put up billboards and ads (on election day itself Honeygirl de Leon was on TV relentlessly pitching for her boss); the statistical improbability that was the Cebu tally (giving GMA a bigger margin over FPJ than in her own province of Pangasinan); and Raul Gonzalez's and Francis Pangilinan's railroading of the Senate counting (the word "nored" will never be the same again; no wonder Gonzalez got an instant promotion).

No, I am not amazed that the SWS has confirmed Ibon's revelation. You can fool all Filipinos some of the time and some Filipinos all the time, but you can't fool all Filipinos all the time.

I am amazed, however, by one thing. That is the equanimity with which we are taking all this. Elsewhere, news like this would be greeted with angry editorials and calls for the President to resign. Or at least for a full-blown investigation to be made. Here, we've met the news with a shrug of the shoulders and mutterings of

"what else is new?" Truly, every day raises the bar in our capacity to tolerate iniquity.

What is especially frightening here is that our lack of outrage does not come from ignorance but from tolerance. GMA has gotten away with murder in several instances because of public complicity, particularly of the more influential sectors of society, including the businessmen and the intelligentsia. The cheating in the elections happened in the first place because those sectors agreed that it was all right for GMA to cheat to prevent a "greater evil," which was FPJ becoming president. The intelligentsia—a most ironic word—was willing to turn a blind eye to the rape of sovereign will for expedience's sake.

The same appeal to expedience is bound to be used again to stymie any public protest against the cheating in the elections, if at all that protest erupts. Bunye's argument indicates so: "We have to shed off these perceptions and get on with the difficult task at hand." That is going to be the official line: Let's forget about the cheating, what's done is done. Let's concentrate on the coming storm and rally around our president. That is the logical continuation of the previous line, though never articulated, which was: "We have to shed off our inhibitions about screwing the vote and get on with the difficult task of preventing FPJ from winning." Both trot out the bogey of a "greater evil" to justify a clear and present one.

In fact, the only way we can deal with the difficult task at hand is for us to stop shedding our scruples about wrongdoing. The concept of a "necessary evil" is the most dangerous thing in the world. The only thing worse than financial bankruptcy is moral bankruptcy. We already have the second, the first is waiting round the corner.

We want to deal with the difficult task at hand, we need a leader who is honest, upright, and forthright, not one who lies, cheats and steals. We want to survive the crisis, we need a necessary good, not a necessary evil.

Even if that has to take the form of another Edsa.

Stunning move**POLITICAL
TIDBITS****Belinda
Olivares-Cunanan**

THE ADAGE about adversity bringing out the best in people recently proved itself again to be true with some recent developments. Last Tuesday, leaders of various political parties in the House of Representatives met with Speaker Jose de Venecia in an "emotional" caucus, during which they agreed to scrap the pork barrel system from the 2005 national budget. Though they still have to submit their unprecedented proposal to their parliamentaries later this week for approval, they said it is as good as carried.

JDV very much in his element, eloquently stressed how the House has taken "the moral ground and political high ground" in this time of financial crisis, by ensuring complete transparency and accountability in all government transactions.

For a long while now, House members have been smarting from public criticisms of their "greed" for pork—how it has been the principal source of their political power, but alas, also of corruption in Congress, as it encourages kickbacks. Last Tuesday, the House leaders pulled the rug from under the critics' feet—they abolished the pork barrel system entirely. Before that, only about 80 House members had agreed to give up 40 percent of their pork.

It now behooves the Senate to also seize the same high ground so the move will have the force of law. I see no problem. Even before the House initiative, several senators, led by Senate President Franklin Drilon, had given up their pork entirely. Joker Arroyo has not touched pork from his days in the House; Panfilo Lacson has given up his pork in the past two years.

Significantly, President Macapagal-Arroyo, who seemed happy to see Congress giving up 50 percent of its pork barrel funds, had earlier said she'd match whatever Congress gives up. Now she has to let go of P20 billion.

In scrapping the pork, the House leaders agreed on two things that would enhance transparency and accountability: to push the "line budgeting system" in the proposed P907

billion General Appropriations Act for 2005; and to enforce the E-Procurement Act, authored principally by JDV a year and a half ago. To appreciate line-budgeting, it should be kept in mind that, over the past years, the senators have automatically gotten their P200 million individual pork and the House members their individual P65 million as lump sum items in the budget. While it's true that they don't get their allocations in cash, Congress members are automatically assured of those amounts in the budget for public works, agriculture or health projects. But under the line-budgeting system, every project will now be listed in the budget, including the price, and the lawmakers will have to defend and justify it. If they can't defend it, they don't get it. One drawback is that it could take even longer to pass the budget as every line will be scrutinized; but with enough determination Congress should overcome. The greater advantage is that wastage of taxpayers' money could be removed.

This system will be greatly aided by the E-Procurement Act, since public works projects will be hidden out via the electronic system and will be open to everyone, thus precluding collusion with suppliers and contractors.

Earlier I expressed curiosity as to why Sen. Miriam Santiago is conducting an "expose" of the Smokey Mountain project and attacking the alleged connection between former President Ramos and businessman Regis Romero only now. Some pundits opine that this could have been spurred by a confluence of political and business factors. Aside from the feisty senators

unabashed animosity toward her old rival, some pundits opine that the call for a Senate inquiry into one of FVR's pet projects during his term could have been instigated to undermine his credibility and reduce his sphere of influence.

But others also speculate that the negative publicity may have a "business side" to it. Could it be part of an emerging "port war" in the Port of Manila involving industry giants International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) and Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), on the one hand, against new player Harbour Center Port Terminal (HCPT)? Some believe ICTSI and ATI are opposing HCPT's application for a permit to operate a commercial port with authority to service international and domestic vessels, on the ground that this would affect the financial viability of their own port operations. HCPT now has 98 percent of the non-containerized cargo that the two old players used to share. HCPT is now gearing up for the handling business. Behind HCPT is the RUI Builders of Romero.

I must confess that when my friend Ody Gregorio-Arroyo called to brief me on the current visit of the Archbishop Emeritus of Birmingham, Maurice Couve de Murville of the Order of Malta, I thought the Order is a kind of award or decoration. Ody laughed and pointed out that the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta dates back to the 11th century and the great crusades. She noted that the Order's "Philippine Association" has been serving the sick and the poor for 50 years through the operation of the Malta Clinic, which distributes medicine to medical missions throughout the country. It's also involved with five hospices and homes for the poor and displaced in Metro Manila.

Ody says Fr. Maurice is here to share with the members of the Order his vast knowledge of its history as well as to enhance their spiritual formation. He stresses humility and simplicity, virtues that are particularly relevant to the current economic, political and social situation in this country.

Conduct unbecoming**KRIS-CROSSING
MINDANAO****Noralyn Mustafa**

have run out of blood, kidneys, eyes, teeth and other body parts to sell?

In fairness to Ms Arroyo, she did prepare for that trip, turning her seventh "Pulong ng Bayan ni Pangulong Gloria" (other royals should take note of how she is now addressed, first names after titles being heretofore the exclusive nomenclature of monarchies) on the eve of her trip to Brunei.

I had earlier resolved never again to watch her "pulong-pulong," knowing how unpleasant an auditory experience they can be, especially those unscripted outbursts that the media have indulgently called "the famous temper," but which my psychologist-friend said is really a defense mechanism or compensatory aggressive behavior to cover up acute feelings of insecurity caused by perceived deficiencies, either mental or physical. In simple terms, she concluded, it is a manifestation of emotional immaturity, or low EQ.

But for this one, I broke that vow and sat through it for a very personal reason. This was because that particular pulong was set in Mindanao and on a Muslim motif. Ms Arroyo even dressed for it, coming garbed in a blouse of Maranao weave, and it was held at Barangay Sultan Esmail in Dasmariñas, Cavite with Muslim leaders and NGO workers in attendance.

And it was an impressive presentation too, showing a bright picture of development and progress in Mindanao, marred only by Ms Arroyo's annoying habit of interrupting speakers in mid-sentence to say something silly. Like when a guest introduced himself as representing the 16 royal houses of Lanao, she butted in, declaring that "Sulu is one of the royal houses of Lanao," even repeating this remarkable information for

the more ignorant among the televiewers.

Characteristically, she put in a bit of intrigue, how the people of Zamboanga City were so hostile to the shiploads of *halaw* from Sabah that arrived at their port.

As it turned out, most if not all, of the projects reflected on those maps and charts were being undertaken by private individuals and NGOs, working quietly on their own initiative, funded by foreign sources.

The province of Sulu is celebrating this week its 614th anniversary of local governance and public administration, based on the year 1390, when there existed the two powerful kingdoms of Lu'uk and Mahala (the East and West Kingdoms of Sulu referred to in Chinese annals).

Rajah Baginda established law and order in these islands through a governing structure that consolidated small kingdoms, which subsequently evolved into a sultanate by the time his son-in-law, Syed Abubakar, was proclaimed Sultan Sharif ul Hashim in the year 1450.

This makes the Sulu Sultanate just about two centuries younger than that of Brunei, from where both Rajah Baginda and Abubakar reportedly came. Which is why when the ancestor of Sultan Hassanah Bolkiah was threatened with an attack on his kingdom, it was to the Sultan of Sulu that he appealed for help.

The attack was repelled by the Tausug warriors, although hundreds lost their lives. The Brunei sultan then gave the territory of North Borneo to the Sultan of Sulu as a sign of gratitude and as reimbursement for the expenses incurred in fitting an entire fleet with men and materiel.

North Borneo, now Sabah, was given in exchange for the blood of our ancestors, which is why the Tausugs will never give it up.

Which makes me wonder why, if Ms Arroyo could bring along Lucio Tan and her daughters-in-law to China, she did not invite the Sultan and our own royals, the living links to the Sultanate of Brunei, to that wedding.

Maybe because she thinks Sulu is Lanao?

Comments to nm19@nysmart.com.ph

Dangerous articles**THE LONG VIEW****Manuel L. Quezon III**

such failure shall result in serious damage to public interest, or to a third party."

All four articles seem to me dangerous articles indeed. They are relics of colonialism.

Recall that the Revised Penal Code is an old law. It is Act No. 3815, approved by the Philippine Legislature on Dec. 8, 1930. In those days—up to July 4, 1946, in fact—all Filipino officials took an oath of allegiance to the United States government and pledged to uphold its "supreme authority" in the Philippines, as a condition to accepting, holding, and discharging any office.

It is in the light—the duty to uphold American sovereignty—that the above-quoted provisions must be viewed. They are designed to strengthen the legal grounding of foreign rule; they are not in keeping with a modern independent nation.

To be more specific, Articles 231, 232 and 233 with refusing to obey orders. Beyond the obvious intent of the articles—to prevent Filipinos from disobeying the American governor-general or subverting the apparatus of the colonial government—the articles fail to take into account the lessons of World War II. The Nuremberg, Tokyo and Manila war crimes trials all led to the widespread adoption of the principle that an order, even if legal, should not be followed if it contravenes morality. For example, German and Japanese officers were sent to the gallows because their argument that they "were just following orders" was not accepted as a valid defense.

Art. 231 sounds as if it could have been written by the Nazis: as long as a superior issues an order

"with all the legal formalities," it must be obeyed by an inferior official. This is the sort of rigid requirement of law that led to martial law with all its trappings of "presidential decrees" and "letters of instruction."

Art. 234, too, is quite obviously a legacy of colonialism because it does not permit the refusal to hold or relinquish office on the basis of conscience. This is the sort of legal requirement that is useful, even necessary, to an occupying power; but not the sort of thing the law arms an independent government with.

I can think of many reasons why a person would want to decline to assume office, or to surrender it. I would like to find out how much latitude the law allows a person to exercise his or her conscience when it comes to holding—or letting go of—a public office. If you don't think you can do any good, should you hold on to a position any moment longer? If you believe a government, possessing and exercising—"with all the legal formalities"—power or a mandate your conscience cannot and should not accept, shouldn't you refuse to serve or simply quit? Some people may argue that once elected (and presumably, after having made the effort to run and campaign in the first place), one must serve; just as when asked by the president, he must, even in an appointive capacity.

This raises the question of duty. Do you have the duty to serve, even when you feel, for whatever reason, that your usefulness has come to an end? Senators leave the Senate all the time to take up appointive positions. What of the voters who elected them? If senators can quit, why can't representatives, even if they quit out of pique? These questions may not be too serious in a relatively free democratic system, though they were burning questions during the Japanese occupation and during martial law. The fact, though, that they are still being asked and debated up to the present time is disturbing.

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Illegal reprints

SOMETIME in the past, I wrote about the letter of a reader calling attention to a newspaper in Canada, managed by a Filipino-Canadian, that publishes the contents of the INQUIRER without acknowledging its source.

I pointed out that only newspapers or media outlets that have syndication agreements with the INQUIRER are authorized to reprint the newspaper's editorial materials. I warned the freeloaders of the adverse legal consequences of their action.

From the latest information that I have gathered, it looks like some newspapers in North America that have their target market readers with Philippine roots are engaged in the same activity again. News reports, columns, features stories, and, sometimes, photos are being lifted from the INQUIRER's website, INQ7.net, and reprinted without the latter's permission.

The materials are being passed off as the work of the staff of the community newspapers. Interestingly, the people behind these publications proudly claim that they are veteran or respected journalists in the Philippines before they migrated to their chosen country.

Apparently, the change in environment and cultural values has made the publishers forget the journalist's time-honored tradition of respecting their peers' rights of ownership over their work. Before intellectual property rights became today's buzzword, plagiarism was already considered a capital sin in the newspaper industry.

Authorized reprints

For the information of readers who may chance upon newspapers containing materials that originally come from the INQUIRER, here's the list of the companies that have entered into syndication or reprinting agreements with the INQUIRER.

- Global Vision
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Only the parties mentioned above are authorized to reprint the editorial content of the INQUIRER in their publications or information materials. Thus, if the newspaper where an INQUIRER article appears is not included in the list, it is reasonable for the reader to doubt the validity of the reprint.

The INQUIRER will appreciate getting information from the readers about newspapers here and abroad that are engaged in the illegal reprint of its materials so it can take the necessary action to protect its intellectual property rights.

Unsolicited donation

Going to another subject matter, last Sept. 2, in the course of the 5th annual convention in Tagaytay City of the Asian Association of School Human Resource Management and Development Practitioners, the hat was passed around by the 180 participants to assist the government in its fiscal problems.

A total of P9,790 was collected. A check for the same amount was then sent to the INQUIRER by the association's officials with the note that "we are courting it through your newspaper since we trust that with you as a medium, this token of the educators' concern for the country will reach the right office. Thank you so much for being a trustworthy medium, a refreshing thought indeed."

Although surprised by the unexpected gesture, the newspaper accepted the donation and promised to forward it to the proper office after the Department of Finance shall have issued the guidelines on the handling of donations of this nature.

The acceptance of the donation should not be interpreted, however, as an encouragement or solicitation for similar contributions to help ease the country's financial woes.

Not that the newspaper does not want to participate in that noble endeavor, but it does not have the personnel and facilities to handle or manage monetary contributions from the public for an undertaking of this nature.

To live up to its responsibilities as a good corporate citizen, the INQUIRER prefers to work in partnership with reputable NGOs or civic organizations to accomplish specific social objectives.

On those occasions where the INQUIRER seeks financial assistance for people suffering from medical problems, it asks that the donations be sent directly to a particular bank account or a representative of the needy party.

In any event, the INQUIRER appreciates the trust and confidence the educators have given it.

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascarido Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID**Black hole**

"The GOCCs (government-owned and -controlled corporations) have become the black hole that sucks government revenues from more pressing social and capital services in the past years."

—Rep. Joey Salceda who blamed the worsening fiscal problems to the GOCCs' profligate spending

Beyond Cinderella

"I lived a Cinderella life. Now I realize that life is much more than that."

—Jailed ex-Hung Kong socialite Remedios Buena-Condy said after her release from prison

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Bayanihan Fund should be handled by non-politicians

THE MOVEMENT to help government pay its debts with private donations is highly commendable. Never before had "a patriotic fund-raising drive" become more urgent. However, there are no signs that the undertaking is picking up and on its way to success. There is only the lukewarm response from the general public. The so-called "bandwagon" effect is simply not there.

To get the critical mass support and succeed, the Bayanihan Fund movement, initiated by Speaker Jose de Venecia, should enlist the assistance of individuals who are

beyond reproach—men and women with integrity and credibility; people who are trustworthy, God-fearing, with sincere concern for the poor; and above all, non-politicians. (The success or failure of any undertaking depends on the personality spearheading it.)

There are three persons who meet the above-cited criteria and can easily qualify to take on the role. They have the moral authority to lead, and the "machinery" to undertake the challenge. They are Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales (Luzon and Metro Manila), Ricardo Vidal (Visayas) and Fernando

Capalla (Mindanao).

Let's forget about religion and embrace the ecumenical world for the sake of our country and people. Forget about partisanship and ideology, for it is the future of our children and grandchildren that is at stake.

But entrusting the movement—which includes the solicitation and custody of donations—to politicians would be like entrusting the operation of blood banks to Dracula.

—JEROME L. ESCOBEDO,
Lapu-Lapu City,
Jerome.Escobedo@dalsemi.com

Makati ticketing scheme could lead to confusion

MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay's decision to implement a ticketing scheme for Makati City, with penalties and procedures different from those implemented by the Metro Manila Development Authority, could lead to confusion, arguments and anarchy on the road.

Letting people stand in long

queues to retrieve confiscated licenses when more efficient procedures exist reflects the arrogance of public servants who think of themselves as public masters. Some officials even seem gleeful watching the long lines, noting that they also serve as punishment.

Either the MMDA has full au-

thority to implement its procedures throughout Metro Manila or it does not. In the latter case, it would be better to dissolve it altogether rather than to let it go on after its position has been undermined.

—OSCAR S. LABRADOR,
1413 Batangas St.,
Sta. Cruz, Manila

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail

readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.



Is PVAO still paying for its scholars?

WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S strong drive toward austerity, I am left wondering whether this means that even the scholars of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office will no longer enjoy guaranteed education, or that their reimbursements will no longer be paid.

My son was a PVAO scholar, a beneficiary of my mother's educational benefit as a veteran. Under the law, he is guaranteed free college education for four years.

Well, the four years were over last year, but I have yet to be reimbursed for the tuition fees that came from my pocket. Out of the eight semesters, the PVAO only paid for two, or three at the most—the rest I painfully shelled out of my own pocket because the school wouldn't allow my son to enroll unless his tuition was paid.

Would someone in the PVAO please be kind enough and enlighten me about this matter?

—EMMER C. DIZON,
25 Sturges Rd.,
Edison NJ 08817

New building won't disturb nature

WE saw on television the concern of environmentalists and artists who object to the construction of a building on Arroceros Street. They argue that it will disturb the artists and the birds.

However, may we inform the public that the proposed building will house the Division of City Schools-Manila which for a long time has suffered the discomfort of cramped offices at the city hall. The education supervisors themselves have appealed that they be housed in just one building for better coordination and functions. At present, they are housed in different schools, namely P. Gomez Elementary, Mabini Elementary and Manila Science High. Recently, the principals of these schools requested that the supervisors' offices be transferred because their student populations have increased and they need the space for classroom purposes.

Among the 14 school divisions in the National Capital Region, only DCS-Manila has no building of its own, despite its being in existence for over 106 years.

We would also like to point out that the lot in question is a property of the city government, purchased in 1992 to accommodate a division office, among others. The suggestion to look for another site is out of the question; purchasing another land for the purpose will deplete the fund that has been allotted for other equally important

needs of the division's 103 schools. Money has already been spent for the building design. In fact, the city mayor has given instructions that no big trees should be felled when the building is constructed and that the design should blend with the environment. Moreover, the proposed DCS building will occupy only a portion of the lot—an estimated 2,200 sq. m. out of a total land area of 21,000 sq. m. Thus, artists who wish to commune with nature will still have the space they need for their painting sessions or contemplation. They only have to ask for permission to use the place for such sessions from the Office of the Mayor.

The DCS-Manila, in cooperation with the city government, has continuously tried its best to provide its youth with excellent basic education. In keeping with the times, it also desires to provide its supervisors and support personnel with the best work environment.

The fauna may be disturbed but if they could talk, they would not object because they would understand the plight of 40 supervisors, 376 non-teaching personnel and 11,500 teachers, as well as their urgent need for a "nest" which should have been provided them years ago.

—MA. LUISA S. QUIÑONES,
schools division superintendent,
Division of City Schools, Manila

Media's 'hot' penchant

THE GAS calibration project initiated by Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte resulted in many things, not all of them pleasant. Media focused on "dealer-cheaters" and lambasted them on the air before any investigation could be done. National government agencies suddenly "woke up" to implement long dormant rules. A drivers' association is now seeking a harsher punishment for erring dealers.

I think it is important that the issue be studied carefully before innocent gas station dealers are compromised. I do not claim that all gas station dealers are honest, but I feel for some who have been unfairly accused of "cheating." Some are people whom I personally know. They are not the type to take advantage of customers.

True, some pumps malfunction and may misdeliver. The City Hall people, gas companies and Department of Energy can attest this can happen—and not always intentionally.

It is disappointing that when media interview people "in the know" about the current issue, they do not report all the facts and focus instead on sensitive/emotional issues certain to elicit a negative reaction from the public. The news is manipulated to keep viewers tuned in to their channels. *Mandarin, mandarin, mandarin, mandarin*—these were the harsh words used in news programs to prejudice the supposedly erring dealers. It is

this kind of reporting that stir the masses into believing that businesses are taking advantage of them. Gas dealers and fuel companies are blamed for the rising prices of gasoline, triggering society's collective wrath. The fact that it is a global issue is not given much emphasis—mentioned, yes—or properly explained.

In one interview, a DOE director was given so short an air time that she was unable to inform the public of the truth behind miscalibrations. Was it because clarifying the problem was not a "hot" issue that this DOE director was not given enough time to explain? Is this what we call responsible media reporting?

Media people need the foresight and maturity to realize the consequences of their news reports and commentaries. Both sides of an issue should be reported—at the same time. Even if media try to correct misinformation they have released by eventually airing the other side after the fact, damage has been inflicted and would be difficult—maybe even impossible—to repair.

Media can make or break any person or institution. They are capable of influencing our citizens' thinking. Let us enhance the capacity of our masses to intuit the truth, by letting them make their own judgments based on facts alone.

—SUSANA CALALAY-YÑIGUEZ,
dealer, Petron, Timog, Quezon City

Be careful with 'hanga' and 'tuba-tuba'

THE DEPARTMENT of Agrarian Reform and the Philippine Coconut Authority should be cautious in encouraging the propagation of the indigenous plants *hanga* (petroleum plant) and *tuba-tuba* (PDI, 8/23/04). The two government agencies claim that both plants are good sources of bio-diesel and that our country needs about 70,000 to 350,000 metric tons of the plants a year.

According to their studies, one tin can of *hanga* seeds can produce one liter of oil which will yield 45 percent gasoline. If true, the plant could indeed be a blessing not only to farmers but also to all Filipinos. But the problem is—can the government manage, control and sustain the project?

Not too long ago, similar projects like *nata de coco*, *lufa* and *African lito* productions turned out to be a nightmare instead of a dream come true for those who invested in them. Many who ventured into those projects never recovered their investments, and worse, many remain still heavily indebted.

The earthworm culture in the '80s, which was said to be the ultimate hope because it promised hefty profits in just a few months,

left thousands of small entrepreneurs bankrupt; hundreds more of full-time employees who gambled their lucrative jobs to go into the project ended up poor and desolate.

Likewise, there was the precious golden *kuhol* which turned out to be "tanso" (brass). The ill effects of that failed project are still felt to this day by the lowly farmers all over the country. The only people who benefited from the lowly *kuhol* were the greedy businessmen who ventured into the distribution and sale of overpriced snail killers. Poor farmers were left with no option but to buy the pesticides just to save newly planted rice seedlings from being devoured by the voracious golden *kuhol*.

The two agencies should instead look at the more pressing problems of coconut farmers—the lands they till have not yet been awarded them; so is the P100-billion coco levy funds which to coconut farmers might be their only real and last hope.

—PERCIVAL G. BARBA,
Camp Ollivas,
San Fernando City,
Pampanga

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IRA cut to force closure of 15 hospitals

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

BAYBAY, Leyte—Gov. Carlos Jericho Petilla has raised apprehension that the plan to cut the province's Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) might lead to the closure of provincial hospitals.

He pointed out that in the past years, the nine district hospitals and six community hospitals, which are under the direct supervision of the provincial government, are in "financial hemorrhage."

One way to stop this problem, Petilla said, was for the IRA not to be touched as planned by the national government.

"With the planned reduction, hospital services would be affect-

ed or worse, some of our hospitals may die by natural death. I'm very, very much worried about this," he said during a dialogue with Western Leyte Provincial Hospital (WLPH) personnel in Baybay, about 108 km west of the capital Tacloban City.

He said that with the province's limited budget, his administration could not afford to give all its focus on these hospitals because other services would suffer.

Last year, the province re-

ceived P690.63 million in IRA share, a sizeable amount of which went to these provincial-maintained hospitals.

Petilla said the provincial government earmarked P223 million for the operations of the hospitals, which had only a total earning of P9 million.

In the case of the WLPH, he said, it only earned more than P900,000 last year but its budget reached P28 million, half of which went to salaries and other

benefits of its 120 personnel.

The WLPH has 100 beds and is supposed to serve the towns of Inopacan, Albura, Javier, Mahaplag and this town. At present, only 45 patients were confined in the hospital.

Petilla has proposed to rehabilitate and operate these hospitals like private institutions in order to earn profits and stop the "financial hemorrhage."

He said a feasibility study was being conducted by an ad hoc com-

mittee he created headed by Sr. Elousa David of the SVD-owned St. Paul's Hospital based in Tacloban.

"We have to establish what is free and what is not free," said the governor.

He said part of his plan was to have four private rooms at the WLPH for those who could afford "competitive rental."

Petilla said he also planned to provide more facilities so that patients would come to the WLPH instead of a private hospital.

Abu Sayyaf member in priest's abduction arrested in Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY An Abu Sayyaf member involved in the abduction of Claretian Missionary Fr. Rhoel Gallardo and about 70 students and teachers from Barangay Kumalarang in Isabela City on March 20, 2000 was arrested Thursday afternoon, the military said on Friday.

Gallardo was later beheaded. Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga said it was not known if the suspect, identified as Adshar Ismael, alias Abu Junaid, was among those who killed the priest.

Ismael is an alleged follower of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon.

Senga said Ismael was apprehended while visiting his family.

He said military intelligence agents had placed Ismael's house under surveillance and finally caught up with him on Thursday.

A military intelligence officer privy to the arrest said Ismael was presented to several

suspects, who positively identified him as one of their captors.

"Two female former hostages kicked and slapped Ismael, saying they were raped during their captivity," the intelligence officer said.

Senga said Ismael was being interrogated to determine his participation in other activities of the Abu Sayyaf.

Col. Raymundo Ferrer, commander of the Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade based in Basilan, told the *Inquirer* that the military's continuing campaign against the Abu Sayyaf had netted more suspects since July.

In August alone, three suspected bandits were arrested.

They were junior leaders Ibnu Abbas and Muin Hamza, who each had a P1-million reward for their capture, and Abu Sabaya's younger sister Sarra Abdulaup Tilao. *Julie Alpala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 sergeants killed in accident

By Delfin Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Two Army sergeants died and another was seriously injured when the motorcycle they were riding on was hit from behind by a Nissan Terrano van in an early dawn road accident along the Diversion Road here on Saturday.

Police identified the fatalities as S/Sgt. Johnny San Luis and T/Sgt. Jose Losanta, both assigned at the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Unified Command based at Camp Nakar here.

The two suffered multiple serious injuries and different parts of the body and died at the Quezon Memorial Hospital.

The driver of the motorcycle, T/Sgt. Angelito Lonosa, also suffered multiple injuries and was brought to the AFP Medical Center in Metro Manila after receiving emergency

treatment in the hospital.

Police said the soldiers were traveling aboard a motorcycle at around 2 a.m. when a speeding red Nissan Terrano bumped their vehicle from behind.

After the collision, the van sped away from the scene. However, police investigators headed by SPO4 Marcelino Uy were able to trace the vehicle in one of the subdivisions on the outskirts of the city.

The van was reportedly owned by one Danstand Medenilla, of San Narciso, Que-

According to the police, Medenilla's daughter, Bianca, who is reportedly a Sangguniang Kabataan president in San Narciso, was driving the vehicle.

The suspect has been detained at the city jail pending the filing of criminal charges against her.



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More violence in N. Vizcaya land row seen

EMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya—Officials and civil society leaders here have expressed concern over the threat of continued violence between a landowner and Kalanguya settlers over a property in the upland village of Santo Domingo here.

Gov. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma called for sobriety from both sides, as she lamented the confrontation between a group of settlers and members of a demolition team and policemen on Thursday.

Cuaresma said government agencies should immediately adopt measures to settle the dispute involving the 149-hectare Abesamis Estate in Sitio Upper Batu.

"We do not want a repeat of what happened [Thursday]. If only we were informed and were able to sit down earlier, that unfortunate incident would not have happened," she said in a dialogue attended by opposing parties and local and police officials on Friday.

Win-win solution

Renato Navata, regional director of the Department of Agrarian Reform, appealed to landowner Felix Abesamis Jr. to suspend the demolition for a week, to give the settlers, the Department of Agrarian Reform and local governments time to come up with measures that would bring a "win-win solution" to the problem.

Abesamis, however, vowed to push through with the demolition.

"This case has [dragged on] for 16 years already and [we have yet to get] justice. We want to get

back the land so we can give them to our farm workers as part of the CARP (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program)," he said.

"Nobody can stop me now, not even the President of the Philippines," he added.

Acting on a writ of demolition issued by the DAR Adjudication Board (Darab), the demolition team, backed up by 30 policemen and Army soldiers, clashed with around 100 settlers on Thursday, wounding two people.

Lawyer Ernesto Salunat, the settlers' counsel, denounced the "inhumane" treatment that residents suffered at the hands of the demolition team.

Help

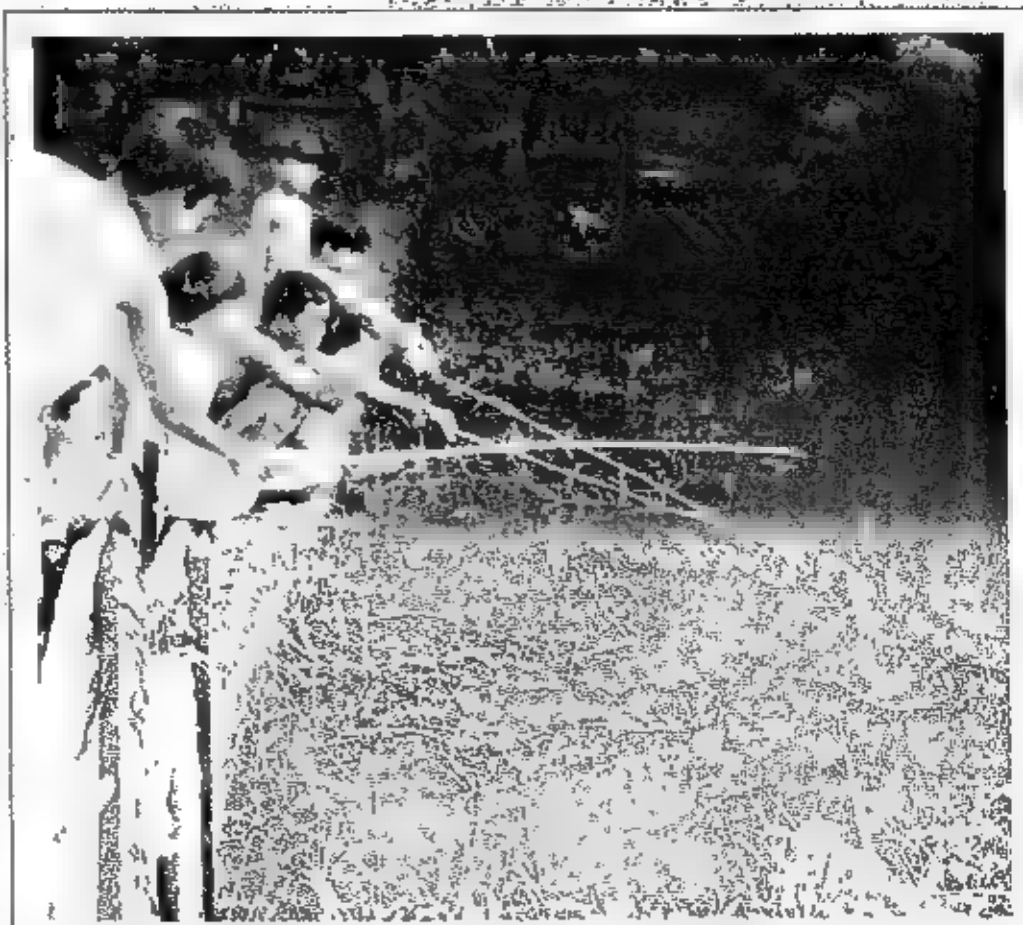
"(The team) did not give even the smallest bit of respect for the people. They tore everything down to the extent that nothing can be made out of the materials. Their personal belongings had been scattered," he said.

Sr. Maria Eden Orlino, director of the Diocesan Social Action Center, said they were helping the settlers overcome the trauma they suffered from the demolition.

"We could see from their faces—old men and women, children, couples—that they were all terrified," Orlino said.

Brunhild Pascua, Darab adjudicator, said he would order a one-week suspension of the demolition.

He said Salunat has asked the Supreme Court to comment on the legality of the Darab decision evicting the Kalanguya tribe members from the Abesamis property. **Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**



FISHING TIME

Children take advantage of the flowing water to bait fish at a creek in Candion City, Ilocos Sur.

LEONCIO BALBIN JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Bohol takes steps to protect Panglao

TAGBILARAN CITY—Gov. Erico Aumentado has issued an executive order enforcing the salvage zones, or an easement for public use along the shorelines of, as well as enforcing sanitation laws on, Panglao Island to protect its pristine waters in the wake of tourist influx.

Aumentado told reporters that he signed Executive Order 13, because he did not want Panglao Island to suffer the same fate that befell Boracay Island several years back.

The beaches of Panglao and other coastal towns have increasingly attracted foreign and domestic tourists, he said.

In 1998, then environment secretary Victor Ramos declared Boracay a "disaster case" due to a high level of coliform bacteria found in its coastal waters, which was blamed on unabated waste dumping.

As a result, Boracay suffered at least 60 percent drop in tourist arrivals. Fortunately, the problem has since been remedied.

According to EO 13, there is a need to enforce the Water Code of the Philippines, especially on prohibition of structures, to protect and preserve the beaches of Panglao and the coastal towns in the

province as well as sustain the tourism industry.

The code establishes an easement for public use along the shores of the seas in the interest of recreation, navigation, floatage, fishing and salvage.

The Code bans any structure within three meters from the high water mark in urban areas, 20 meters in agricultural areas and 40 meters in forest areas.

But the EO noted that certain natural and juridical persons established structures "within the prohibited zone and even in foreshore areas" in violation of the Code and other existing laws and regulations.

The EO also noted that some of the structures within or near the prohibited zone such as cottages, restaurants, resorts and other accessory buildings and structures for human habitation "are suspected to have improper septic vaults resulting to the seepage of effluents into the sea water."

This has led to the contamination of the seawater with "harmful bacteria and other hazardous substances." Aumentado said all structures within the public easement zone or environmental protection area should be removed not later than Dec. 31. **Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau**

Hatred drives 2 men to kill 4 relatives

DAVAO CITY—Too much anger drove two young men to kill their four relatives and wound three others early Saturday in Matina, Talomo District here.

This was learned after the suspects, Chemuel Balanay, alias Kim-Kim, 21, and his brother Elbun, 16, were arrested yesterday morning in Barangay Calumpang, General Santos City.

Mayor Rodrigo Duterte presented the suspects during his weekly television program, dubbed Gikan sa Masa Para sa Masa (From the Poor, For the Poor) yesterday.

Later, the suspects were brought to the place of incident in Cariñosa Street, Lanza Subdivision, Matina for a reenactment of the killing of the brothers' uncle, Diosdado Lacorte, 55, his wife Evelyn, 48; his son-in-law Julius Villarmia; and grandson, Kenneth, 9.

Still recuperating at the Davao Doctor's Hospital are Diosdado's daughter Grace Lacorte-Hashigochi and her Japanese husband, Tamuto; and Julius' three-year-old daughter, Maria Carmela Beatriz.

Duterte himself interrogated the suspects on how they committed the gruesome crime.

Chemuel said they arrived at the Lacortes' house Friday night from their place in Governor Generoso, Davao Oriental.

He said he intended to borrow money from the Lacorte couple for a very important purpose. But the Lacortes reportedly refused that, prompted him to decide killing the couple.

Chemuel said he instructed his younger brother to cooperate and help him. Armed with a hunting knife and four-foot pipe bar, the two attacked Diosdado and Evelyn who were both inside their room sleeping.

Julius allegedly tried to stop the attack but ended up also being hit with the pipe bar and stabbed with the knife.

Chemuel said they also saw the young Kenneth in the living room and killed him.

The three wounded victims arrived later and were attacked as they entered the house.

Chemuel admitted he was used to be the Lacortes' helper in the family-owned restaurant along Roxas Avenue. He claimed the Lacortes treated him unfairly.

"My uncle and aunt were very strict. They were blaming me for mistakes I did not commit," he said.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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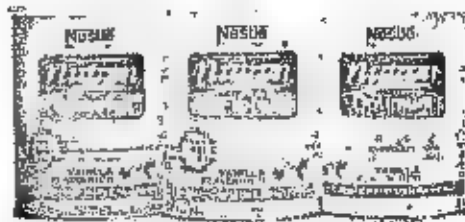
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JAKARTA CAR BOMBING

MILF leaders raise alert on JI presence

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Chair Murad Ibrahim called on his followers to 'always keep their guard up against any force that might shake the relatively friendly atmosphere established between their group and the government.'

The call came following reports that Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) members who bombed the Australian Embassy in Indonesian capital of Jakarta on Thursday could be hiding in the Philippines.

Eid Kabalu, spokesperson of the MILF, said Murad's call was also a reiteration of standing orders for

their group not to associate with the terrorist group.

What the MILF chair was trying to avoid, Kabalu said, was a repetition of experiences in the past where their group, having been suspected of harboring JI members, end up fighting with government forces despite a ceasefire agreement.

He said there were groups out to derail the peace process by using the JI issue.

The government had placed a virtual bridge between the JI and the MILF over the past years. The MILF also repeatedly denied any association with the JI, a terror group linked

to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida.

But Kabalu said the MILF was not discounting the possibility of entry of JI members in the Philippines. He said that with the stiff security measures implemented by the government and with their help, that possibility of was slim.

Police intelligence reports in Central Mindanao indicated that JI members had been moving around Mindanao actively during the last two months.

An intelligence officer, who requested anonymity, said the suspects were often sighted in Maguindanao.

The officer said the first report, al-

though not considered verified information, revealed that several Afghans suspected of being JI members had been seen in Maguindanao on many occasions recently. The suspects were allegedly training rebels in the manufacture of bombs using car batteries.

Another report, tagged "A-1" information, said five Indonesian-looking foreigners and a Tausug JI member were also spotted in Maguindanao. Their alleged purpose is to make car bombs, a JI signature attack.

"Our report says their target would be Davao City or General Santos City," the officer said.

Recent military reports also said at least 30 JI members were training in Mt. Cararao in Lanao del Sur, a known MILF lair.

The report was denied by MILF officials who even called for an investigation by the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities.

"We have long been vigilant against the JI's presence especially in areas that we control. Right now the chairman directed all our members to monitor their presence or even to prevent their entry," Kabalu said.

"Our efforts are our share of showing our sincerity to the peace talks," Kabalu said. Jeffrey Tupas, Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

Police officer slain

MATI, Davao Oriental—Suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels shot dead a police officer in San Isidro town on Wednesday and fled with his service firearm. Jaspe Salvani, San Isidro police chief, said PO3 Edwin Edita, 43, of the 1106th Provincial Mobile Group had just alighted from a truck he hitched a ride on when several armed men approached and shot him. Salvani said Edita died from at least four bullet wounds in the head and abdomen.

Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Faith healer jailed

ROXAS CITY—A 75-year-old faith healer was jailed after he was accused of molesting a 25-year old patient on Sunday. William Acuyong was arrested after the parents of the young woman went to police to complain that he kissed and touched her private parts during a "healing session" at the faith healer's house in Barangay Maubili here, supposedly to drive out the "evil spirit" from the victim's body. Acuyong claimed that the woman consented to his acts. But her parents said she could have not given her consent since she was mentally ill.

Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau

Guard slain near expressway

GULU, INTD, Buacan—A guard of Philippine National Construction Co. was killed while his companion was wounded after armed men shot them near the North Luzon Expressway's Balintawak toll plaza on Wednesday morning. Isagani Rico, PNCC deputy chief for traffic safety and security department, identified the fatality as Reynaldo Cortez, 45. Rico said Cortez's companion, Benjamin Dabo, was wounded and taken to a hospital in Meycauayan town. Reports said the guards were detaching the license plate of a cargo truck at about 2 a.m. when armed men aboard a Mitsubishi Pajero shot them.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

New road to reduce traffic

ALAMINOS, Laguna—Government officials and local residents are optimistic that the recent opening of a P7-mi. diversion road in Barangay San Roque would spur economic development in this small agricultural town by decongesting traffic in the main highway going to San Pablo City, Quezon and Batangas. Mayor Samuel Bleser said the opening of the Don Marcelino Pule Diversion Road would not only reduce traffic by 70 percent but also bring new opportunities to the residents.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Abandoned lumber seized

CITY OF CALAPAN—Police and members of the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office here took some 1,200 board feet of abandoned lumber on Sept. 3 in Barangay Mayagao, Baco town. The lumber is now under the custody of the Centro.

Madonna Virolo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Peñafrañcia exhibit

BICOLANO stained glass and mural artist Pancho Pinao opened a solo exhibit at the Basilica Pavilion in Naga City on Wednesday. Pinao showcases more than 20 of his paintings of the Our Lady of Peñafrancia to pay his homage and devotion to the patron saint. The exhibit, titled "Handog," will run until Sept. 30.

Joanna Teresa Los Baños, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Tricycle services

CITY OF CALAPAN—The city council is taking steps to "professionalize" the services of tricycle drivers in the city. Councilor Jose Leynes, committee on transportation member, said during a public hearing last week. Professionalizing, Leynes said, meant courtesy to riders, giving discounts to students and senior citizens, and wearing the proper outfit—a t-shirt and closed shoes. The council also hoped to reduce traffic violations. To help the drivers save on fuel, the council proposed a "color-coding" or area assignments. The city has about 4,000 tricycle units, half of them without licenses to operate, Leynes said.

Madonna Virolo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Search for top volunteers

DEADLINE for the submission of nominations to the Search for Outstanding Volunteers 2004 has been extended to Sept. 17, according to a news release. Nominations are still being accepted in other regional offices of the National Economic and Development Authority, the Regional Planning and Development Office of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, except Caraga. Forms may be obtained from these offices and the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency, or may be downloaded from the PNVSAC website at <http://www.pnvsac.neda.gov.ph>. For details, call 927-6851, telefax no. 929-6376 or email them through pnvsac@pnvsac.neda.gov.ph.

Isabela OFWs slam gov't bid to tax them

MALLIG, Isabela—A group of overseas workers from Isabela said the proposed tax on Filipinos working abroad would bring more burden to the country's so-called modern-day heroes.

"Overseas workers are dollar earners for the country and yet, the government wants to give us additional burden," said Marquita Soberano, president of the Malling Overseas Contract Workers Association.

Soberano said overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) should not bear the brunt of the government's failure to properly manage the national coffers.

Earlier, Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong said OFWs should help in efforts to ease the country's financial crisis through the payment of taxes.

Filipinos working abroad used to pay a 2-percent gross income tax before the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program was implemented in 1997. The amendments in the old tax law exempted them from paying taxes.

Elizabeth Africano of the District 2 OFW Association in Cauayan City said OFWs were already doing their share to help the economy. Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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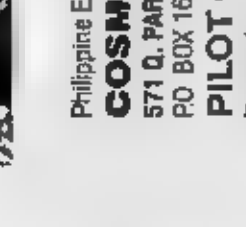
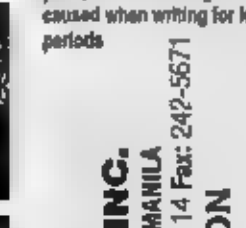
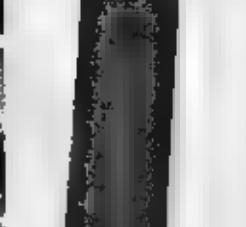
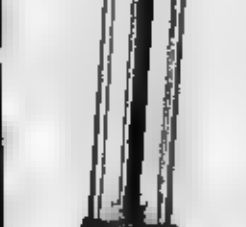
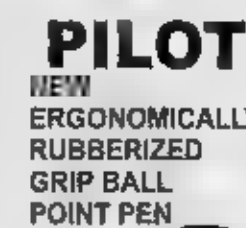
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01-30 Crossroads: Collective Works of Second Generation Artists	01-31 Ju Ming 2004 Singapore-Belling-Shanghai Asian Sculpture at its Best	01-30 Ju Ming 2004 Singapore-Belling-Shanghai Asian Sculpture at its Best
01-30 Ju Ming 2004 Singapore-Belling-Shanghai Asian Sculpture at its Best	01-31 MAMMA MIA! Ten Swire Man	01-30 MAMMA MIA! Ten Swire Man
01-30 Ten Swire Man	01-31 Sing Song	01-30 Sing Song
01-05 VOLUNTEER A DAY, VOLUNTEER WITH KNOWLEDGE	05-07 Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater	05-07 Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
01-12 Festival of the Hungry Ghosts	09-31 Hot Rays Light-Up	09-31 Hot Rays Light-Up
03-04 The Merry Widow	14-22 Navaratri Festival	14-22 Navaratri Festival
08-12 Cheers Asian Satellite Badminton Tournament	14-31 Pilgrimage to Kusu Island	14-31 Pilgrimage to Kusu Island
10 Singapore Hill Awards 2004	15-31 Deepavali Light-Up 2004	15-31 Deepavali Light-Up 2004
10-11 An Evening of Huang Mei Opera Tunes	24 Action Asia Challenge	
11 Jeff Chang & Sky Wu Concert 2004		
12 Comedy for U		
16-30 Sing Song		
17-20 Jewellery Time 2004		
17-18 Fel Yu Qing Charity Concert & World Tour 2004		
17-18 Russian Rousers		
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Sneers greet House ...

From page A1

is still there from identifying the projects and the contractors," the Senate leader said in an interview.

The pork barrel is money allocated in the annual budget by the national government to each legislator for projects of their choosing to ingratiate themselves with their constituents.

It is also a known source of kickbacks for lawmakers, local officials and contractors.

Each House member is allocated P70 million in pork barrel, while each senator is assigned P200 million, for a total of P20 billion a year.

Ploy

The question now on the mind of the senator was whether the twin moves taken by the House were meant to retain the full amount of the lawmakers' pork barrel funds.

"Is it a ploy to put back to 100 percent the pork barrel funds now with an allegedly transparent system?" he asked.

The senator was referring to Malacañang's move to slash by 40 percent the pork barrel allocations of all lawmakers as contained in the proposed 2005 budget that it submitted to Congress last month.

The senator also wondered whether the items in the new budget could be realigned, say in the middle of the year. He said this could be done. "So what's the use of resorting to line item budgeting?"

Brownie points

Evardone said congressional insertions would "negate the purpose of their move to abolish the pork barrel system."

"It will come out as just a mere show to earn 'pogi' (brownie) points. The people should continue to be vigilant against moves in Congress to hide the pork barrel funds in the lump-sum congressional insertions," he said.

The league also asked the Senate to follow the lead set by the House to abolish the graft-ridden pork barrel system in the 2005 national budget.

Evardone said abolishing the pork barrel would "enable Congress to concentrate and focus on its primary mandate to legislate laws."

He said the abolition of the pork barrel and line item budgeting would "improve transparency and accountability."

Malacañang welcomed the reported House decision to abolish the pork barrel but reminded lawmakers they still needed to pass new taxes for the government to solve the fiscal problem.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a radio interview that reducing or doing away with the pork barrel was just one of the government's austerity measures to help address the budget deficit.

"But aside from austerity, we need to pass revenue measures. We need to strengthen the system of collection and we need to continue our fight against corruption. This is the total picture, the comprehensive solutions to our problem," Bunye said.

Earlier, the President asked Congress to

pass eight new taxes to raise P80 billion to cover the budget deficit.

Quid pro quo

Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (LR, Camarines Sur) said the House appropriations committee, which he chairs, was ready to conduct a line item scrutiny of the P907.6-billion national budget submitted by Malacañang.

"In short, line item budgeting removes the discretionary power of the executive over a large swath of the budget," Andaya said in a statement. "There will be no more nooks and crannies in the budget where executive pork can be hidden."

He predicted that some agencies would lobby President Macapagal-Arroyo to ask Congress to "back off from line item budgeting as it would mean the surrender of executive prerogatives over the budget law."

"But that is the *quid pro quo* of removing pork. We give up pork, you give up lump sums. Fair is fair," Andaya said.

Andaya noted that line item budgeting would "flush concealed pork and even funds for ghost employees out of their hiding places in the national budget."

The Andaya committee will start conducting hearings on the proposed 2005 national budget on Sept. 20.

A Quezon legislator said abolishing the pork barrel next year could be perplexing for some of the first timers in the House.

"Just like the veterans, most of the first timers have made promises of projects to be funded by the PDAF," Rep. Proceso Alcala (LR, 2nd dist.), a first timer, said.

He noted, however, that there were lots of new members in the House who welcomed the changes.

"Most of us prefer line item budgeting. It's more transparent. Every project proponent is now obliged to exercise more prudence. Even Malacañang's undisclosed budget is also now open to scrutiny," Alcala said.

Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez (LR 3rd dist.) said the abolition of the pork barrel next year was the call of the people and the House leadership.

But he said the abolition of the pork barrel would be hard to explain to barangay officials who had all requested projects to be funded by the PDAF.

Real test

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said a cut of at least P20 billion in the proposed budget for 2005 would be the "real test" that lawmakers were giving up their pork barrel.

He earlier said that if all lawmakers agreed to his challenge to give up their pork barrel like he had been doing since 2002, this would mean P20 billion in savings for the government.

Lacson said that if congressmen would resort to line item budgeting, then it means that the implementors would be the same, meaning the line agencies.

"Then it's still the same dog with a different collar," Lacson said in an interview. With reports from Carilo Pablo and Juliet Labog-Javellana in Manila; and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Tax luxuries of rich...

From page A1

The strategy includes implementing a genuine austerity program, improving tax collection and making public the "incomes and paid taxes of top government and economic leaders and [other] groups to encourage prompt payment of correct taxes."

Charity won't help

Habito said that while donations to the government's Bayanihan Fund would help, people should not be led into believing that this could be enough to solve the fiscal crisis.

"Let us not deceive ourselves that charity will bring us out of the crisis," he said.

"We're different from Thailand and South Korea," Habito said, referring to the neighboring countries whose previously financially strapped governments benefited from the contributions of their citizens during the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

"That was a regional crisis. Everybody suffered there. But this is a self-inflicted crisis," Habito said, referring to the Philippine situation. "The faithful continue to pay their taxes while others do not."

Bangon president Bro. Eddie Villanueva

said the government had "overtaxed" ordinary Filipinos but failed to collect some P240 billion in taxes, including those owed by rapists and big businesses.

Habito also urged the government to seek debt renegotiation with creditors. The Philippines has outstanding total consolidated public sector debts amounting to P5.3 trillion, Bangon said.

Bangon officials said debt relief, whether in the form of a cap on debt payments, extension of payment deadlines, debt renegotiation or restructuring, would enhance the country's fiscal position.

Villanueva, who campaigned for debt relief during the May presidential election, said the billions of pesos saved from debt payments could be used on programs that would spur economic growth.

Repudiate bad loans

"We challenge the government to take steps for the renegotiation of loans with onerous terms and repudiation of the most fraudulent ones," the evangelist and former economics professor said.

Other suggestions in the 10-point strategy include:

- Formation of anti-tax evasion and anti-corruption courts
- Abolition of redundant offices
- Firing of all "15-30" government employees, or those who report for work only to collect their salaries
- Giving of incentives to the most productive and graft-free agencies.

Students blast Suarez bill

Students opposed to further taxation of telecommunications services, especially text messaging, yesterday branded as discriminatory the 7-percent computer education tax proposed by Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez.

The Filipino Students' Democratic Union and the Students Opposed to New Taxes said it was unfair for Congress to target the telecommunications industry for new tax measures to raise revenue needed for government services, such as education.

"We believe that the better strategy is to impose, say a half percent computer education tax, on the top 1,000 corporations in the Philippines, instead of burdening just one business sector with a 7-percent special tax on education," said Earl Arezamenoz, president of FSDU and convener of StopTax. With a report from Norman Bordadora

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Lawmaker likens fiscal crisis to cancer growth

From page A1

"While nominal GNP (gross national product) has grown by only 11 percent, NG debt has grown at 17 percent per annum and tax revenues grew by only 5.41 percent," he said.

The result: NG debt rose from 53 percent to 76 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) while total public debt rose from 103 percent in 1997 to 137 percent in 2003.

Salceda said interest payments would reach P302 billion in 2005, becoming the largest budgetary item in the proposed General Appropriations Act and overtaking salaries for the first time.

He noted that the principal culprit in the accumulation of debt was the successive deficits of the national government. "Since 1986, the national government has balanced the budget only twice (1994 and 1997) out of 18 years with P908 billion in cumulative deficits," he said.

Salceda said any analysis of the fiscal crisis must begin with the origins of the yearly national government deficit, which could either be a spending problem, a revenue problem or both.

He put into perspective efforts to cut waste and corruption, which are currently being undertaken in view of the projected P312-billion public sector deficit this year.

"As a policy tool, spending cuts can barely close the budget gap of P312 billion as 88 percent of expenditures are mandatory and the 18-percent discretionary expenditures for social services and infrastructure were already sub-optimal vis-a-vis GNP," he said.

Revenue problem

The fiscal crisis is principally a revenue problem, according to the congressman. He noted that while GNP was growing by 11

percent, tax revenues were increasing by only 5.41 percent and non-tax revenues by 4.2 percent, for a total revenue growth of 5.2 percent.

"Total revenue-to-GNP ratio fell by 4.9 percent from 19.5 percent in 1997 to only 14.6 percent in 2003," he said. "The fundamental divergence between revenue growth of 5.41 percent and the nominal GNP growth of 11 percent is at the core of the crisis."

Salceda said revenue underperformance was more structural than administrative in nature. He pointed out that since 1997 not a single revenue measure was passed.

He also pointed to "legislated leakages" that reached P174 billion in 2003, principally for investment incentives offered by the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, and the lowering of tariffs.

Increasing the tax-to-GNP ratio to its 1997 level of 17 percent should cure the fiscal crisis, Salceda said. But he said there was not enough to be collected through better tax collections if no new revenue measures were passed and current regulations amended.

Revenue measures

He identified a number of measures that could yield substantial revenues for the government:

- Indexation to inflation of so-called sin taxes on cigarettes and alcoholic beverages: P14 billion.

- P2 per liter tax on petroleum: P20 billion.

- Two-step increase in the expanded value added tax from 10 percent to 14 percent: P30 billion.

- Tariff adjustments (higher electricity rates) for National Power Corp., with the recent 93 centavos per kilowatt-hour increase reducing the consolidated

public sector deficit by P34 billion.

- Calibration of the share of local government units of taxes in terms of the internal revenue allotment to a "more reasonable level" compared with the current 40 percent.

For the government's part, Salceda identified some measures to ease the crisis:

- Cut in discretionary funds—special privileges of government-owned and controlled corporations, intelligence funds and pork barrel of Congress—which can "play a catalytic role in the total solution by rebuilding public confidence and expanding the people's forbearance for pain."

- For the administration to obtain credit upgrades within 18 months as downgrades in the country's credit standing result in additional interest costs.

- Investments in basic infrastructure to reduce costs of doing business and balance the budget to keep interest rates and inflation down.

Looking at the fiscal picture from 2005 to 2007, Salceda said a total of P215 billion in fresh money could be generated—P166 billion from the "pain package from new taxes, tariff hikes and spending cuts; P32 billion from tax efficiency measures, and P30 billion in interest savings from the privatization of Napocor.

Isabela judges take gun training course

From page A1

prosecutors, lawyers and court employees in Isabela on Friday underwent training in handling and firing guns to protect themselves from attack.

Eight women judges, lawyers and court workers took part in the training conducted by the police Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit.

"Judges like me gained insights on protecting ourselves. The enemy will think twice now before doing their evil deeds," Judge Raul Babaran of the Cauayan City Regional Trial Court said.

Isabela Prosecutor Anthony Poz said the killing of Kalanga Judge Milnar Laminawin in August made judges and lawyers realize that they also needed gun handling skills to defend themselves from disgruntled parties in the cases they were handling.

Laminawin, who was hearing heinous crimes cases, was the seventh judge murdered in the last five years, Supreme Court officials said.

In June, Batangas Judge Voltaire Rosales, also handling cases of heinous crimes, was killed in an ambush.

The training included lectures on responsible gun ownership, crime prevention and self-defense.

The trainees, including those who had never held guns before, went through firing exercises using .45-cal., 9mm, .38-cal. and

357 Magnum handguns lent them by the police.

Some used their own guns. The police provided the bullets.

"Seminars like this will help (But) responsible gun use is a must," said Senior Supt. Napoleon Estilles, provincial police director.

Despite the training, police will still provide bodyguards to judges, court workers and lawyers under death threats, Estilles said.

Police also recently met with local journalists and gave them tips on security measures and handling death threats. Fifty-five media members have been killed around the country since 1986.



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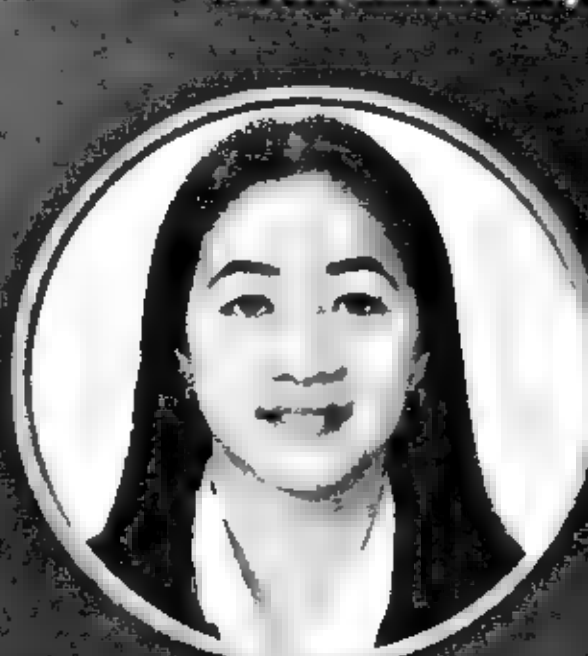
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Pain remains fresh for 9/11 victims' kin

From page A1

Trade Center Ground Zero.

It was like stroking a constant fire.

Their voices breaking, parents and grandparents stood at the WTC site and marked the anniversary of the attacks by reciting the names of the 2,749 people who had died there.

This provided a bookend to last year's commemoration, when it was the victims' children who read the list.

Punctuated by tearful dedications, and over violin strains, the reading yesterday took three hours.

"We miss you very much, we love you very much, and we'll never forget you because you're in our hearts forever," said Stewart D. Wotton, looking skyward to address his son Rodney James.

"Our loving son, Paul Robert Eckna, our tower of strength—we love and miss you," said Carol Eckna.

"We miss your big smile, Kev," said Mike Williams, recalling his son Kevin Michael.

Four moments of silence were observed—at 8:46, 9:03, 9:59 and 10:29 a.m.—the precise times that the two planes slammed into the Twin Towers, and when the buildings collapsed.

Former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Gov. George Pataki and other guests spoke with a clear theme—the inexpressible grief of losing a child. Pataki quoted former President Dwight Eisenhower: "There's no tragedy in life like the death of a child. Things never get back to the way they were."

When the program ended, a chorus of children sang and two trumpeters—one each from the police and fire departments—played taps.

By then, hundreds of families had descended a long ramp into Ground Zero, sobbing, embracing each other and tossing a layer

of roses into two square reflecting pools meant to evoke the fallen towers.

Some, like the Fernandez family, wore images of their lost loved ones on T-shirts; others held large pictures aloft.

It gets harder

The pain remained fresh, said Pat Hawley, 44, who came to the annual ceremony to remember his older sister Karen Sue Juday.

"It gets harder every year, because it's that much more time since I've been able to talk to my sister and be with her," said Hawley, of Charlotte, North Carolina.

"[This is] just a place to reconnect," said Anne Allen, 58, of Fort Lee, New Jersey, who lost her brother Salvatore Pepe.

Fernandez's daughter had worked as a human resources officer at Cantor Fitzgerald. The investment firm awarded millions to families of employees who died in the attacks.

"I don't care about the money," Fernandez said. "I want my daughter back."

Victims' families also got compensation from the government and other agencies.

From all these, the Fernandezes were able to buy a modest house in Little Egg Harbor and set up a scholarship foundation in their daughter's name. Judith had always been happy to help in this way, they said. The foundation helps send three students through high school.

Judith's cousin, Maria Theresa Santilla, also died on 9/11. Their aunt Adora Rivera said she had not stopped mourning.

Elsewhere in the US

Bells tolled at the moment hijacked Flight 93 crashed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

A moment of silence was observed at the Pentagon for the 184 victims there. And in Washington, President George W. Bush stood in silence on the White House lawn.

At Arlington National Cemetery, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld joined relatives of the Pentagon victims near a large granite marker. Family members laid flags at the marker that bore each victim's name and ran their fingers across the inscriptions.

In a field in western Pennsylvania where Flight 93 went down, volunteers rang two large bells as the names of each of the plane's 40 passengers and crew were read.

"We know that no words, no memorials, nothing can take the place of all that you have lost," Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, who was Pennsylvania's governor at the time of the terror attacks, said to the victims' families at the ceremony.

In Boston, a small plane pulled an American flag behind it as about 150 relatives of victims held a moment of silence. Soldiers also paused at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and nearly 70,000 fans at an Iowa State football game rose to cheer three New York City firefighters and a faded American flag unearthed from the WTC rubble.

Manhattan today

Lower Manhattan has changed dramatically since the sunny Tuesday when its gleaming towers were reduced to smoking rubble.

A commuter train station has opened on the site's northeast corner, eventually to be transformed into a \$2-billion transit hub. And a 20-ton granite cornerstone was laid on July 4 for the

533-meter-tall Freedom Tower, the skyscraper set to open in 2009 that will be the centerpiece of the redeveloped trade center site.

Meanwhile, work still continues to identify the 20,000 pieces of human remains that were recovered after the attack. The medical examiner's office has identified about 1,570 victims, or just 60 percent.

On Saturday, a few blocks from the trade center site, friends and families of the 73 people who died at Windows on the World, the restaurant at the top of the trade center, tossed roses into the Hudson River for each of the victims, many of them immigrants.

"We used to be a family," said Pekkak Mamdouh, who was a waiter there.

World stops

At a memorial for the 84 Port Authority of New York and New Jersey employees who died, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the attacks had shaped the character of New Yorkers.

"Today as we stop to remember, our worlds stop again," the mayor said. "That tragedy we saw before our eyes is not woven in the fabric of who we are."

Other events included a Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral for fallen firefighters, and the dedication of a memorial to Staten Island victims at the ferry terminal across the harbor from the trade center site.

The ceremony for the memorial—two 12-meter soaring sculp-



PEOPLE gather to view a memorial to the victims of the 1993 and 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center on the esplanade in the Staten Island borough of New York as the "Tribute in Light" shines from lower Manhattan.

tures of white post cards with the victims' names—was attended by Giuliani, who called Staten Island "the bedrock of the city."

"The losses you endured on 9/11, both as a borough and individually, are unimaginable," he said.

At sundown, two powerful beams of light—inspired by the Twin Towers and first seen six months after 9/11—rose and brightened up New York City's sky. They remained on throughout the night. With a report from AP

Children sacrificed as pawns in war . . .

From page A1

of the Cold War

The war on terrorism has claimed more lives in three years than in the benign years of the Cold War, excluding the periods of active hostilities (as in the Korean War and the Viet-

nam War)

The wave of terrorist attacks this year has killed more than 2,000 people, mostly civilians. In this war, civilians are increasingly becoming vulnerable as hostages in the struggle to pursue political objectives.

A few days before the 9/11 anniversary, militants bombed the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, serving notice that the US-led war on terror was far from being won. At least nine people died and 182 were injured, mostly Indonesians, in the blast. One casualty was a 5-year-old Australian girl.

The militant Jemaah Islamiyah, which has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida, claimed responsibility for the Jakarta car bombing. The JI, which maintains training centers in Mindanao, has warned Australians in Indonesia "to leave this country or else we will transform it into a cemetery for them."

The terrorist group has also warned the Australian government to withdraw its 800 troops from Iraq. If the demand is not met, the warning said, "we will deal them painful blows."

The fact that the bombing took place in the midst of the second presidential election run-off scheduled for Sept. 20 led to an interpretation that the Jakarta attack was aimed more at the Indonesian government due to its crackdown on JI-associated terrorist groups than at Australia due to its active military involvement in the Iraq war.

Leverage

Whatever the real motivation behind the bombing, civilians are increasingly being used as leverage by terrorists in achieving their political objectives.

Two weeks ago, the world was shocked by the hostage-taking of no less than 500 schoolchildren in the Russian town of Beslan by Chechen militants who represent the violent face of the Chechen separatist movement. The Beslan siege marked a new depth of depravity and bestiality in terrorism in which innocent civilians, especially children, are used as hostages to advance political objectives.

More than 300 children died after Russian forces assaulted the school, which the terrorists had wired with explosives.

In March last year, more than 200 Spanish commuters were killed in the bombing of three trains at one of Madrid's train terminals. Although there were no hostages involved in the Madrid massacre, the bombings were timed on the eve of the Spanish general elections.

As in last week's Jakarta bombing, it appeared that the Beslan and Madrid attacks had been carried out to blackmail governments into changing their hardline policies on terrorist groups.

At the time of the Madrid bombing, Spain had troops with the US-led occupation forces in Iraq. The bombing created a backlash on the Aznar government in Madrid, which lost to the Socialist Party that had pledged to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq.

The terror campaign to force a policy change had mixed results. The Socialist policy of withdrawing Spanish troops from Iraq had been set before the election, so the Madrid bombing was not the catalyst.

RP case

Blackmail involving noncombatants worked when applied to the Philippines which accelerated the withdrawal of its small contingent in Iraq after the a Filipino truck driver was taken hostage in Iraq. The Macapaga administration bowed to demands of a militant Iraq group which freed the Filipino hostage after the withdrawal of the Filipino troops from Iraq. The withdrawal opened a rift in the US-led coalition in the Iraq war.

Hostage taking, as a blackmail weapon, is unlikely to soften the tough counterterror campaign of the United States and Australia. The Beslan massacre has even made Russian President Vladimir Putin tougher in his policy of not negotiating with terrorists.

Reflecting the outrage in Russia over the Beslan carnage, Putin said how could he negotiate with "children killers." Putin's reply underscores his unbending approach toward terrorists, despite appeals from the United Nations and the United States for the Russian leader to search for a negotiated solution to the Chechen insurgency.

"We have shown weakness in the face of danger and the weak get beaten up," Putin said. Moscow has gone even further to warn that Russia would launch "preemptive attacks" anywhere in the world to strike at terrorists.

This warning, however, has more bark than bite. There are doubts on Russia's logistics capability to launch such an operation. Moreover, the US experience with preemptive strikes to combat terrorism is a sobering argument against it.

The United States has invaded Iraq, and not even the downfall of the Saddam Hussein regime has failed to reduce terrorist attacks or stopped Osama bin Laden from carrying out terrorism through al-Qaida surrogate groups.

The prospects, therefore, are that three years after 9/11, the cycle of violence driven by both hardline terrorists and warlords against terrorism has increased the risk of civilians and noncombatants being crushed as hostages in the middle.



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Ginebra cager hurt in mishap

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A PROFESSIONAL basketball player was hurt when the motorcycle he was driving collided with a Nissan X-trail in Quezon City the other night.

Hours later, a 42-year-old man was killed after a Toyota Revo ran over him while he was crossing Don Mariano Marcos Avenue, also in Quezon City.

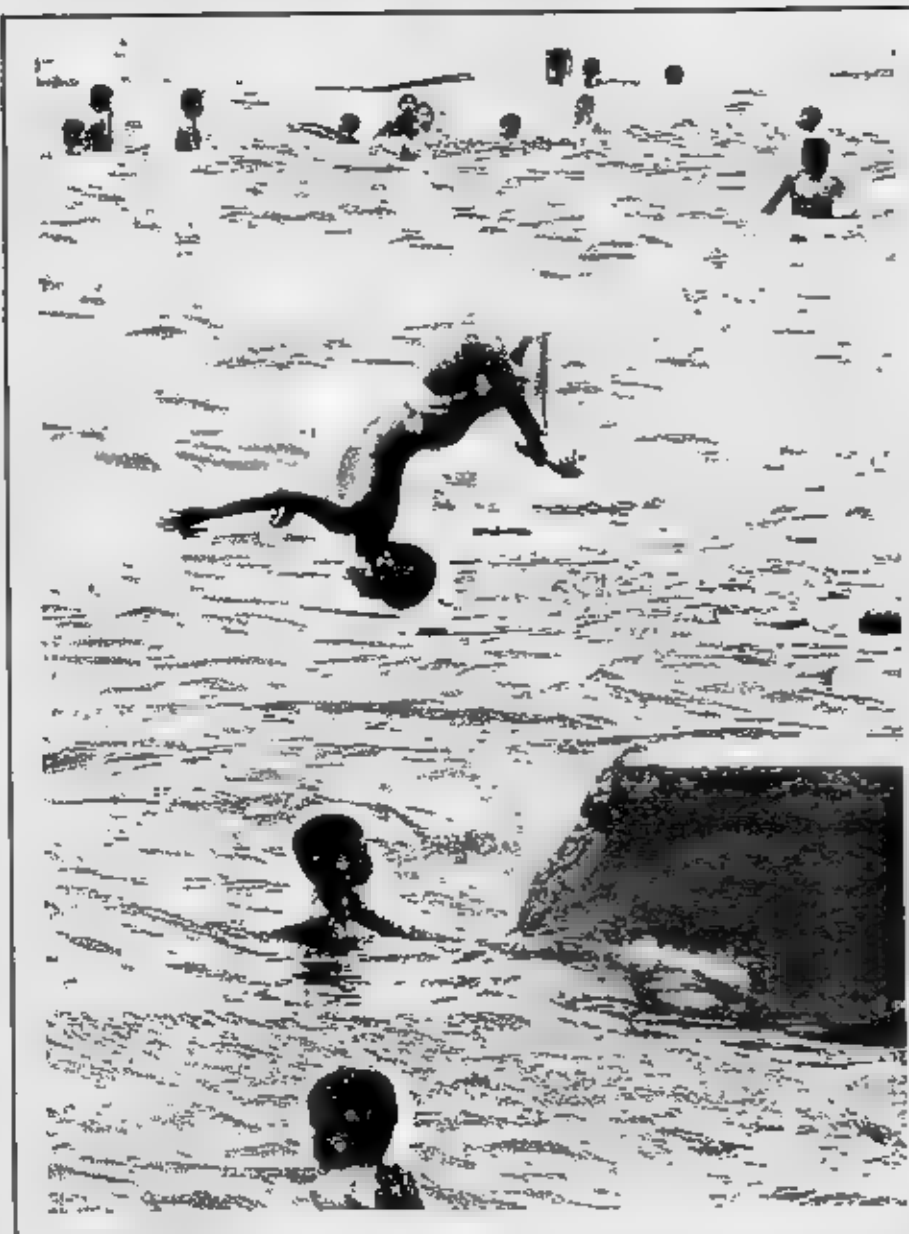
Alex Crisano, who plays forward for Barangay Ginebra, met the accident at 8:45 p.m. Saturday near the corner of Bonj Serrano Avenue and 11th Avenue.

Rohanie Panolong, 33, who was inside the Nissan, also sustained injuries, police added.

Crisano's yellow Honda motorcycle hit the right door of the Nissan driven by Taha Mauryag as the sports utility vehicle was turning left into 11th Avenue from Edsa.

At 12:15 a.m. yesterday, Ruo Flores, 42, was crossing the avenue in front of Commonwealth Heights Subdivision when the Toyota accidentally ran over him.

The driver, identified as Nelson Espejo, 57, tried to drive away but hit the steel railings in front of Sandiganbayan Building, SPO1 Reynaldo Patiag said in his report.



LOOK, MA!

A boy performs a stunt as he and dozens of other people, mostly children, take a dip in the waters of the Manila Bay near the US Embassy on Sunday. The bay remains a favorite of bathers despite the proliferation of garbage and the resulting health risk.

New SPD chief vows to keep Baclaran clean

By Margaux C. Ortiz

CHRISTMAS will not be an excuse for sidewalk vendors to return to Baclaran.

That was the promise of Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia, newly appointed director of the Southern Police District (SPD).

"We would continuously block the vendors' attempts to re-occupy such areas like Baclaran," Garcia said as he took command of the SPD during rites yesterday morning in Makati City.

Garcia said they would continue to monitor the roads and areas in the southern part of Metro Manila, and conduct dialogues with the community and vendors groups.

He said that among his priorities would be police visibility and intensified anti-crime operations.

Garcia, who served as the Philippine National Police

deputy director for operations for two years, replaced Chief Supt. Prospero Noble Jr.

"I thought my nine-month stint as district director was too short," said Noble, adding that he had been able to deliver on his commitment.

Noble has been appointed National Capital Region Police Office deputy director for administration.

PNP chief Director General Edgardo Aglipay recognized Noble's exemplary handling of the SPD.

"I can see improvements on the SPD policemen's deportment: their actuations and how they carry their uniforms," Aglipay said, adding that the police force should know their responsibilities by heart and be constantly reminded of their commitment for change.

During the turnover rites, Aglipay gave out awards to

26 police officers.

Noble, Senior Supt. Rosendo Franco, Chief Insp. Joaquin Alva, Insp. Lerpon Platon, Insp. Joey Goforth and SPO1 Jesus Tan were given the Medalya ng Kasanayan, while Senior Insp. Reynaldo Ulic, Emmanuel Nacis, Enrico Ebon, Laurence Cabutihan, Ranelo Navarro, Gregorio Recto and Rodelio Rania were awarded the Medalya ng Kagalingan.

SPO1 Bernardo Pascual, SPO3 Hermunio Salvacion and PO1 Rodel Binauhan were given the Medalya ng Papun, while Senior Insp. Vicente Raquon, SPO4 Cresencio Manabat, PO2 Renne Aseboque, PO2 Ronnie Aseboque, PO2 Joseph dela Cruz, PO2 Leo Gabrang, PO2 Wilfredo Sangel, PO2 Elmer Dumaculangan, PO2 Alfred Torrean and Rodel Ordinario were conferred the Lanyard award.

Inventor says gadget saves gas

THIS gas-saving invention may be one that Filipino motorists can call their own.

Named after the Greek goddess of air, the Khaos Super Turbo Charger is a gadget attached to a car engine to make it more fuel efficient and environmentally friendly, said inventor Pablo Planas.

The 67-year-old Planas explained that Khaos worked by providing the engine with the right mix of air and gasoline to result in better combustion.

Better combustion means more fuel savings and less pollution, he said.

Planas, a 67-year-old former jeepney driver, said he came up with the gadget back in 1973 primarily to help him save on fuel expenses.

During that time, the world was in the middle of an oil embargo by Arab countries.

Feeling the pinch, then President Ferdinand Marcos ordered the rationing of gasoline.

By that time, Planas had graduated from being a jeepney driver to a jeepney operator, owning four units that plied the San Juan-Manila route.

Faced with limited gasoline availability and higher prices, Planas decided to tinker with his jeepneys' gasoline-fed engines.

He discovered unburned fuel in the exhaust system which made him realize how much fuel was wasted.

Planas then came up with his apparatus that controlled the intake of air and fuel into the engine with a ratio of 15:1.

According to him, he refined his invention and in 1976, the government awarded it the first place in a competition of 44 gas saving devices.

In 1977, Planas said, the National Pollution Control Commission declared his gadget as very effective in controlling emissions.

Last year, President Macapagal-Arroyo gave him the Presidential Award Medal for his invention, he added.

Amid soaring gasoline prices, Planas is offering his gadget to car owners who wish to cut their gas consumption by as much as half.

He said several companies in the US and Germany were offering to buy his invention but he was holding back.

"If I accept their offer, Filipinos may soon not be able to afford its cost," Planas said.

Currently, Khaos is being marketed by Inventionhaus International from its offices in Quezon City. A unit of Khaos costs around P6,000.

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METROBRIEFS

Camanava flood project hit again

ACTOR-SENATOR Ramon Revilla Jr. expressed dissatisfaction yesterday over the continued delay in the construction of the Camanava Flood Control Project. Amid the delays, Revilla, who looked at several project sites Friday, said the Department of Public Works and Highways was asking for an additional P71-million funding from the government. But assistant project manager Carla Bartolo said the delay was minimal and that the entire project could be finished as scheduled in 2007. **Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

No rebellion in WPD

INVESTIGATORS of the Western Police District (WPD) Homicide Unit said yesterday that they would abide by their officers' decision on their request to be reassigned. But an investigator said the WPD must assign more men to follow up homicide cases, if they are ordered to remain in the unit. On Saturday, the investigators who complained of being overburdened with work handed over a memo which they described yesterday as their courtesy resignation. **Tarra V. Quismundo**

Fishballs trigger killing

ASKING for more fishballs can be deadly. Drinking buddies Edgar Camillo, 42, and Danilo Manalili, 37, died of stab wounds after three men attacked them in Cagocan City, police said yesterday. The two reportedly got into an argument with a certain Sonny Parane, a vendor, when they tried to buy fishballs but he had run out of the foodstuff. The victims then allegedly started yelling at the vendor. Parane left but reportedly returned with two other men who then attacked Camillo and Manalili. **Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

Bicol clergy hold reunion

A SIGNIFICANT event in the celebration of the Pafrafrancia festivities in honor of our INA, our Lady of Pafrafrancia, is the coming together of the Bicol clergy on Sept. 14-17, 2004 at the Holy Rosary Minor Seminary in Naga City. This is an annual gathering of Bicolano priests and bishops (more than 400 of them) coming from the Archdiocese of Caceres, Diocese of Legazpi Virac, Masbate, Sorsogon, Daet, the Prelature of Libmanan and the Military Ordinariate. This annual gathering was first held on Sept. 18, 1959. The gathering of priests and bishops coming from the six Bicol dioceses and the Archdiocese of Caceres is meant to strengthen their unity through a four-day prayer experience, fellowship and sports fest.

Legislator wants PNR lots seized

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A COUNCILOR wants Manila to confiscate the assets of the Philippine National Railways (PNR) in the city to settle P200 million in real property taxes left unpaid since 1992.

Councilor Ma. Theresa Bonoan-David is proposing before the City Council an ordinance that would order the seizure of PNR-owned land, particularly those used for train tracks.

PNR tracks run through Paco, Sta. Ana, Sampaloc and Tondo near the Divisoria commercial district.

"The PNR has been remiss in paying its real property tax after repeated demand, giving the City of Manila the authority to foreclose it," said Bonoan in her proposal.

Bonoan seeks to appropriate the PNR property for a housing project.

"Manila shall construct a medium rise condominium and allot spaces for... tenants [along the railway]," her proposed ordinance read.

In an interview, Bonoan said the PNR tracks across Manila somehow diminishes the city's revenue-generating capability.

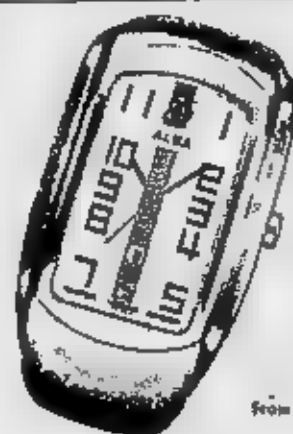
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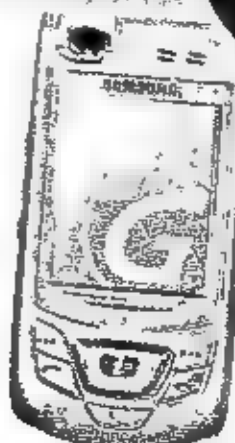
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Ateneo vs La Salle . . . Pasa coup . . .

From page A25

The explosive meeting at 3 p.m. decides who gets the No. 2 slot at the end of the eliminations, behind Far Eastern University, and the second twice-to-beat incentive in the Final Four.

Ateneo dropped into a tie with La Salle for second place at 10-4 after taking a 65-51 thrashing from FEU in their clash for No. 1 Saturday.

The loss also paved the way for a Final Four clash between the Eagles and the Archers, who split their two meetings in the eliminations.

Whoever wins tomorrow needs only to repeat on Thursday to secure a title berth. Otherwise, there will be a rubber match—and a rare fifth meeting in a season for the arch rivals, most probably on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the University of Santo Tomas Salinggawi Dance Troupe bagged its third consecutive title in the UAAP Nestle Nonstop

Cheering Competition yesterday at the Big Dome.

"There was pressure coming in the competition because we've won back-to-back and all the teams were improving," said UST choreographer Ryan Silva, whose group combined hip-hop, jazz and ballet moves to earn a 93.6 percent score for the P115,000 cash prize.

The University of the Philippines Pep Squad, champions from 1999 to 2001, took second place (90.56 percent) and the P75,000 prize. The Far Eastern University Pep Squad finished third (87.09 percent) to win P45,000.

The final rankings had Ateneo at fourth, followed by La Salle, Adamson, University of the East and National University.

In the lone women's action yesterday, the La Salle Lady Archers improved to third place with a 6-5 record after edging the FEU Lady Tamaraws, 42-35.

Also attending the meeting where former Olympian Pinky Brosas, who represented NCR director Ilocos, former president Eddie Boy Ledesma (Region 6), Dale Law (Region 7), Lucio Calo (Region 8) and Leon Go (Region 10).

Ilgan said Brosas, Ledesma, Law and Rosario were already replaced by new regional directors in elections held early this year. The four, however, claimed that they weren't even informed of the elections where they were supposedly replaced.

"The constitution requires us to hold elections every four years in the regions. Some of them (directors) are (already) there for 12 years," said Ilagan, who claimed he has the solid backing of the new board.

But Joseph said it's best for Ilagan to accept the will of the "same board which elected him."

Joseph, Thomson and Rosario also called on former swimmers to help Pasa "and give back to swimming what swimming has given them."

Ozamiz five downs Batangas

OZAMIZ CITY—The Ozamiz Cotta rode on Egay Echavez's all-around game to whip the depleted Batangas 29ers, 80-74, Saturday night in the NRC (National Basketball Conference) national championship at the Gov. Angel Medina gym here.

The former Purefoods guard scattered 18 points and chalked up six rebounds, six assists and two steals to lead Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's cagers to their eighth win in 13 games.

Missing the services of John Dale Valena, Jay Lapinid and Jayson Cuevas, the 29ers committed 19 turnovers against their rivals' 10 and absorbed their seventh loss in 12 outings.

OZAMIZ 88—Echavez 18, Ferran 18, Cabigkis 14, Basilio 12, Guerrero 9, Basco 5, Sampillo 3, Cabrera 2, Araman 2, Libatog 0, Gulyab 0, Marquez 0.

BATANGAS 74—Sayo 19, Maruhal 15, Mallari 9, Sta. Cruz 8, De Castro 7, Mico 5, Camara 2, Rodriguez 0.

Gold medal dreamers offer solutions

AFTER yet another failed hunt for an Olympic gold medal, all we could do is dream, dream, dream.

Just fine. But it must be stressed, no matter how late, that an Olympic gold would not necessarily banish all the grave afflictions hobbling Philippine sports.

The medal could be a spark, a magnificent, wholehearted push to even greater achievements.

But do take note: An Olympic gold medal can never be a cure-all.

Still, no gold, or even half of it.

So, after the debacle in Athens, everybody must strive doubly harder now.

Unfortunately, the best our top sports leaders could do was resort to the same old post-disaster diagnosis.

It's the same old plot. And there will never be an end to this demand for bigger funding.

What's lacking here is a happier, more vibrant twist.

Like, say, sharper solutions to the sporting ills that, pardon this, are being caused by selfish, inept leadership.

Look, if sports leaders had indeed felt bad about the debacle in Athens, what more of home fans who had been made to hope (by these leaders) that the RP gold hunt would finally be ended?

It won't be an exaggeration to state that, to the very concerned, the frustration brought about by the RP failure in Athens had bordered on terror.

A post-Athens survey of RP sports fans done on the Internet favored the scrapping of our Olympic participation altogether.

At least, there are those who've refused to just sit there and sulk.

They stand up to be counted. They speak out their frustrations.

One of them, Engineer Teofilo R. Palaganas of Champaca, Roxas District in Quezon City, has turned lyrical.

He said he shared our sentiment on the fate of Ms. Tonette Rivero who lost to a Greek blonde storm due to "faulty, biased judging."

Listen: "At 67, I have both witnessed and experienced, on so many occasions, injustice, unfairness, favoritism and discrimination. I firmly believe, just like many others, that as long as decisions are left to human beings, there will always be the possibility of inequities to happen again and again, perhaps due to mortal frailties and satanic influence. In fact, it doesn't occur only in sports, but in other endeavors or competitions. Now, let me share my unsolicited proposition with concerned sports officials both here and abroad: It's about time they used judging through automation, computerization, as apposed adequately in boxing. This is perhaps most appropriate for all contact sports like boxing, basketball, etc."

Thank you very much, sir, for your kind concern.

There isn't much to Athens if I recall; a boxing manager and trainer from Bangkok, Taiwan City. "I sincerely believe we have enough materials to build world class Olympic gold medal winners. In amateur boxing, the biggest problem lies in the system, or the lack of a proper set-up. The role of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines should be limited only to ministerial. The ABAP should be there only to assist the needs of boxers, trainers, second, managers, etc. It should be there to settle disputes, improve facilities, provide medical aid and help form national teams. The training of amateur boxers should be left to knowledgeable private groups or individuals, while the trainers and managers of these talented and select amateur fighters must go with the athletes to international tournaments. If we open the door to private groups, it would be a wider base to select our boxers for international meets. We won't be left sending losing amateurs to the Olympics again and again. This way, the government can also save a lot of money spent for discovering, training of amateur boxers. There will be a vast field with the professional boxing sector and other private entities being encouraged to join the quest for an Olympic gold medal. Look, if you train an amateur boxer now, spend time, effort, and give all you can, you'd get nothing in return, you'd never get him back once he's taken into the ABAP pool. The boxer would end up deserting you because you don't have a contract with him. If the ABAP could provide assurance to private groups, there will be an influx of truly great Olympic hopefuls who abound all over the country."

Unless the system is changed, Mr. Dacer said, the RP Olympic gold medal will remain a dream forever.

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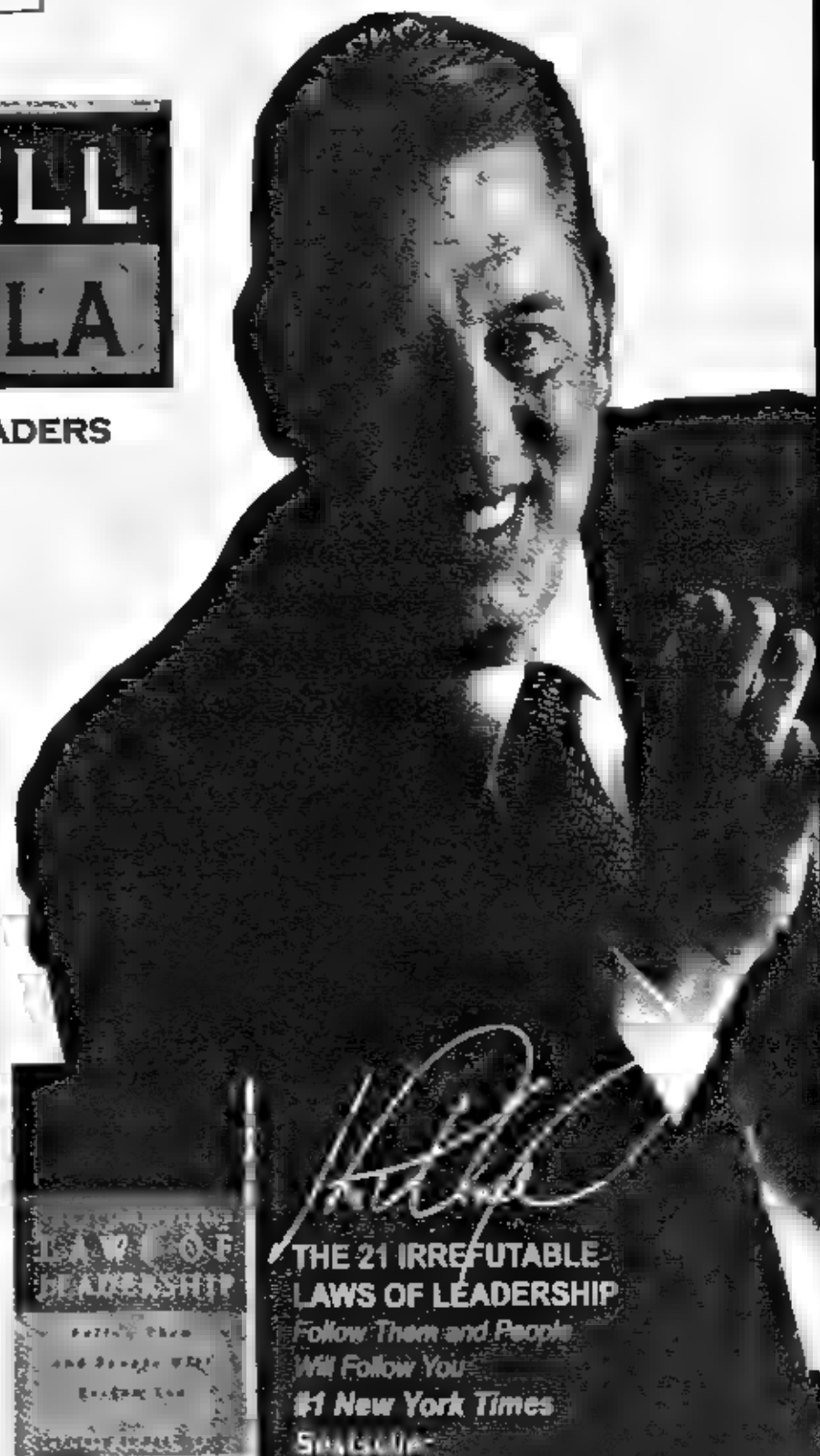
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BIG MOVE: Wesley So sizzles in Vietnam.

So, Galan bag 2 golds each in Asean chess; RP 3rd

FILIPINO whiz kids Wesley So and Jan Nigel Galan captured a pair of gold medals each yesterday to lead the Philippines to a five-gold haul and a respectable third place finish in the 5th Asean Age-Group Chess Championships in Vung-Tau, Vietnam.

The 10-year-old boy in the old Promil television commercial tallied 8.5 points in nine rounds to rule the boys' 12-under rapid event by two points over closest

pursuer Chung Juen-sen of Singapore.

So, whose trip to the tournament is supported by the First Gentleman Foundation of lawyer Jose Miguel Arroyo, also bagged the gold in standard play via a tiebreak over Terry Chua, also of Singapore.

Galan matched So's feat by ruling the rapid event in the boys' 10-under play and the team event with silver medalist Marc Christian Nazario, another player

backed by the foundation.

Team rookie Jedara Docena of Tagbilaran, Bohol, accounted for the country's fifth gold by topping the rapid event in the girls' 12-under division.

Apart from Nazario's runner-up finish, the Philippines also bagged seven silver and as many bronze medals in the championships that lured the region's finest young chess talents.

University of the East junior stalwart Aces Salvador copped the silver in the rapid event of the girls' 14-under play. Backed by the Manila Sports Council head Ali Atienza, Salvador won her last game despite suffering from conjunctivitis.

Vietnam took top honors with 60 gold, 36 silver and 29 bronze medals, followed SO, A32

Olympic jins revel in joy, pride of fans

By Jasmine W. Payo

THEIR bruises are still healing but the heartache of losing in the Olympics is long gone.

Despite their failed medal bid in Athens, Greece, taekwondo jins Mary Antoinette Rivero, Donald David Geisler and Tshomlee Go said they were surprised with all the recognition coming their way.

"At first, *masama ang loob namin*. We were thinking that when we get home, *mapapahiyu kami*. But even if we didn't get a medal, people are still proud of us," said Go during a recent testimonial dinner at the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center at the Ateneo de Manila University.

The Moro Lorenzo Sports Institute, a privately funded organization that trains and supports some of the country's top local athletes, awarded the three jins and their coaches—Jobet Morales and Korean Kim Tae Hyung—plaques of appreciation for their valiant effort in the Olympics.

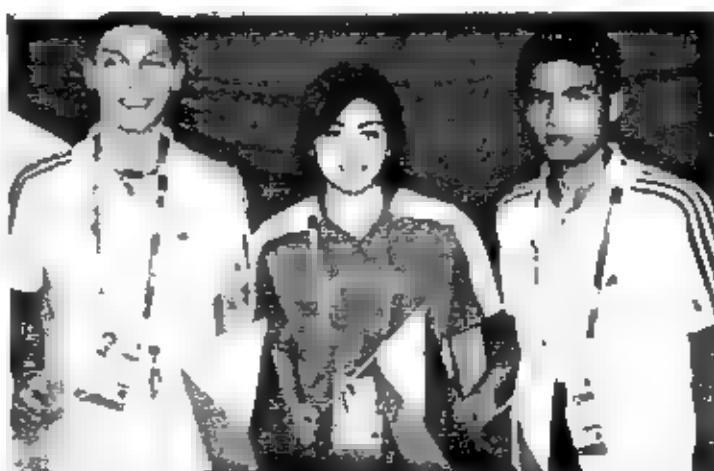
"Right now people still come up to us and say that they're proud of us, that we did very well. It makes us feel good," said Geisler, who's still wearing a special orthopedic boot after

dislocating his left ankle during the Games.

"I can start training in six weeks. I'm hoping to qualify again in the 2008 Olympics. This was my second time but it always feels great to be an Olympian," said Geisler, a veteran of the Sydney Olympics.

The Olympic experience was also overwhelming for Go and Rivero. "It was the best because they treat athletes differently. Everything is so different. You really can't compare the Olympics with other competitions," said the 16-year-old Rivero, the country's youngest bet in Athens.

Rivero moved within a win of a silver medal after winning



WE'LL BE BACK: Donald Geisler, Marie Antoinette Rivero and Tshomlee Go before the Athens battles.

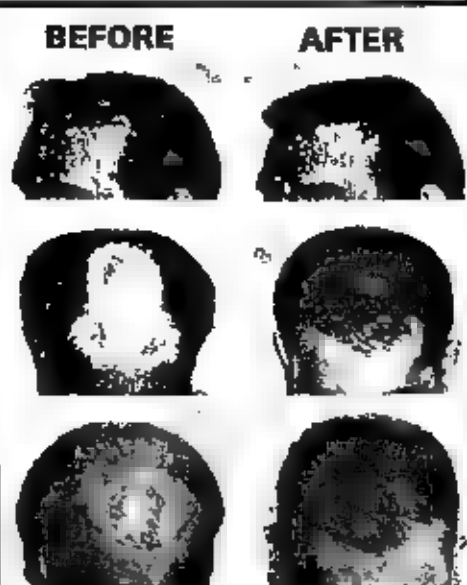
over her opponents from Argentina and the Netherlands in the women's under-67 kg class. But she later lost to her veteran rival from Greece.

Geisler needed three wins in the repechage round to win a bronze medal in the men's under-80 kg category. But the referee stopped his fight in the final two minutes after his left ankle crashed into his Tunisian opponent's right knee. He was

taken out of the arena in a stretcher.

It was also a heartbreaking loss for Go, who was defeated in the dying seconds of his first match in the men's under-57 class.

"I watched my game, saying, I already watched it three times. I guess it just wasn't for me. But we'll try to do better next time. We want to be back," said Go.



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Pascua tops N. Luzon Milo run

LAOAG CITY—Reynaldo Pascua ended Rodolfo Tacadino's reign as Northern Luzon regional champion of the National Milo Marathon here yesterday.

Pascua engaged Tacadino in a heated battle going into the final 10 kilometers of the 21-K race then finished strong to snap Tacadino's winning run at eight with a time of one hour, eight minutes and 54 seconds.

Tacadino came home 11 seconds behind Pascua, with Leonardo Sebastian placing third.

Pascua said he was prepared this time although he needed a mighty effort in the last 500 meters to secure the victory worth P10,000 and a cellphone.

Tacadino said he has not fully recovered after a bout with the flu last Thursday, but added he could have given Pascua a good fight had he known a cell phone was also at stake.

The women's race was a breeze for Vima Butac, who completed the course in 1:31:59. She was followed home by American volunteers Leigh Bonner Tillman of Maryland (1:49:29) and Justine Anne Baruch of Colorado (1:54:54).

The 19-year-old Butac, a student



THE TOP three finishers in the men's race in Laoag City with (from left) provincial board member Shirley Ongsin, Michael Keon, Imelda Marcos and Pat Goc-ong.

from Mariano Marcos State University, said it was her first 21-K race and vowed to train harder in the next two months for a decent showing in the finals.

The top three male and female finishers will represent Region I in the 42-K National Finals in Metro Manila on Nov. 14.

The race, held in partnership with Globe Handphone, Cebu Pacific, Bayview Park Manila, adidas and the Department of Tourism, finished here for the first time after organizers moved the race from Tuguegarao.

Provincial board member and consultant for sports development Michael Keon, the former Project Gintong Alay chair, fired the starting gun that set off about 6,100 runners in front of the Ilocos Norte Provincial Capitol building.

Former first lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos helped Milo Sports executive Pat Goc-ong and race director Rudy Biscocho in handing the awards to the winners.

The 5-K fun run was dominated by James Gako (16:40) and Mary Abegail Bugao (24:27).

Wilson drivers redefine maximum distance

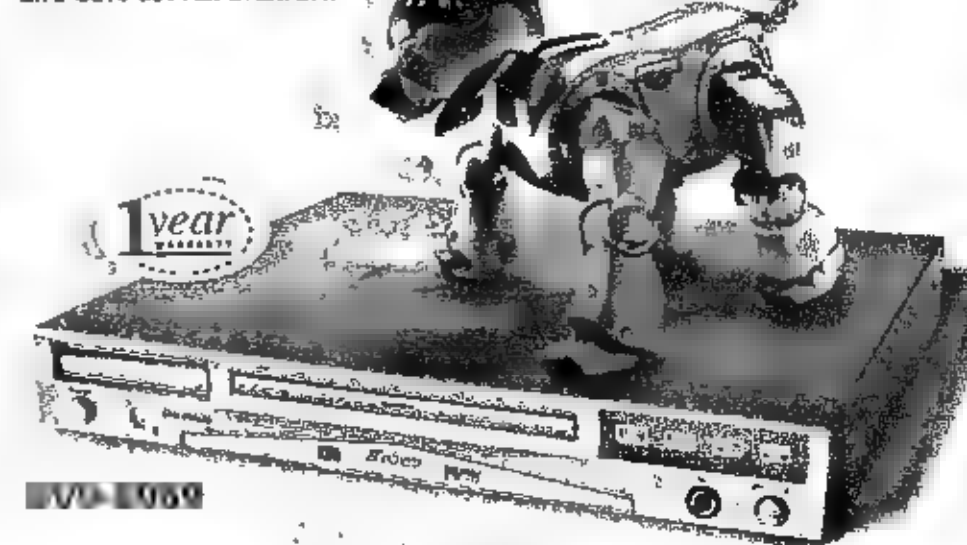
EQUIPMENT giant Wilson is introducing a complete line of products using the revolutionary Nano technology in a bid to revitalize its position in the golf market on its 90th anniversary.

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Aside from the drivers, Wilson's new equipment arsenal also includes the Wilson Staff FwC fairway woods, hybrid (Hb5) clubs, Tw5 wedge and the Arch+ Putter Series, five models carrying the distinctive dark red arch which transfers weight further behind the face resulting in a balanced and stable putter through the putting stroke.

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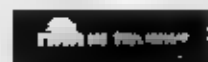
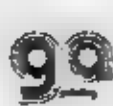
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Cockfighting and bird flu

former Evening Post colleague, Rey Briones, for preserving his winning ways in the local cock-fighting scene.

A past World Slasher champion and Pasay Cockpit "Cocker of the Year," Briones recently emerged a co-winner of the 18th Annual Ray-Showdown 7-Stag Derby at the Roligon Mega Cockpit.

Posting an impressive six wins against only one loss, Briones shared top honors with John Pe, Romy Tan and Romano Castillo in the star-studded derby hosted by Danny Ty and Romero Yu.

And while on the subject of cockfighting, I say we are fortunate that the deadly bird flu has not yet reached our shores. Only last Wednesday, Thailand reported the death of a fighting-cock handler who was stricken with the H5N1 virus after 30 of his fighting cocks died due to the lethal strain. He was the 28th Asian fatality since bird flu swept the region this year.

According to news reports, the World Health Organization said the man's death was unlikely to be the last as the virus was endemic in Asia. "The virus is still there and we don't think any real progress has been made in fully eradicating it," said Peter Cordingley, WHO spokesperson for Western Pacific. Cordingley added that fighting-cock handlers were particularly at greater risk because training the birds required extensive and personal handling.

Bird flu is considered by medical experts as comparable, if not deadlier, to last year's global outbreak of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome). So far, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, China and Malaysia have all reported bird flu outbreaks since July.

"We are not worried," said Briones during an interview. "All our fighting cocks are well cared for. We have taken preventive measures by giving our chickens regular dosages of antibiotics and multivitamins, aside from the fact that our farms are clean and well-maintained."

Scientists said migrating birds could have introduced the virus in their droppings or passed it on to domesticated birds during stopovers in their annual winter journeys south for the warm weather. Ever since the first outbreak of bird flu in Asia, millions of birds have been killed to contain it.

Asia is a major source of chickens and ducks, supplying 27 percent of the world's poultry needs. According to economic experts, if bird flu is not contained in the region, it would devastate Asia's poultry industry and leave thousands of people jobless.

ON GAMBLING: Reports that the gambling operations of Macau casino king Stanley Ho have made a comeback in the country are wearing thin with antigambling crusaders, who say that the government must stop Ho and his cronies from conducting their activities here because gambling destroys the lives of people and undermines the moral fiber of the nation.

"People need jobs, not gambling," former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez once said. Lopez ordered the closure of two casinos in 1990 when he was the city's chief executive.

"People should realize that gambling is not the way to earn money," stressed the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. "People should know that God does not approve of that."

And in a privilege speech he delivered last Monday, Samar Rep. Catalino Figueroa said, "Even industries catering to our vices are being taken over by foreigners." He said a group of notorious characters identified with Ho is now "moving steadily and forcefully into controlling the casino and other gambling operations in our country."

According to PDI reporter Carito Pablo, Figueroa said a certain Jack Lin, also known as Lin Wei Cheng, "quietly inaugurated" the Sheraton Marina Casino Hotel in Malate under a franchise granted by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. Figueroa added he could not understand why Pagcor was granting franchises to establishments when it was clear that only Congress had the authority to grant gambling franchises.

Figueroa also said Lin was also the man behind the reported renovation of Ho's floating restaurant docked at the back of the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex for opening of a new hotel-casino in October and at the Fort Llocandia hotel-casino in Ilocos Norte.



National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID NPC-MMSD 2004-016

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-MMSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

Schedule	Date/Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	PR No./Inquiry No.	ABC
I	Sept. 27, 2004 2:00 P.M. Kafao Room	Power Quality Analyzer for Bacayan DPP "MAN"	PS040895-MMER1374 (PB 2)	
II		"Perkins"		2,331,100.00
III		Princess DPP "Fieslick"	PS040927-MMIAM1735	2,434,500.00
IV	Sept. 28, 2004 2:00 P.M. Kafao Room	Mechanical Parts for PB 115 "Perkins"	PS040719-AMLP1239 (PB 2)	2,117,575.08
V		Drydocking of Power Barge 115 located at Katamsang, Sultan	PS040938-MMRV1736	3,000,000.00

NOTE: A Pre-bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedule:

Schedule	Date	Time	Place
Schedule I-IV	Sept. 13, 2004	2:00 P.M.	Moriones Function Room
Schedule V	Sept. 13, 2004	3:00 P.M.	Moriones Function Room

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Division, Materials Management Dept. of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 9245357/9245477 upon payment of non-refundable fee of PHP 500.00 per schedule starting on September 3, 2004, from 8:30 to 11:30 A.M. only. No bid documents will be issued 3 days before the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, MMSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD/MMSD will be honored provided that the Certification is still valid.

Prospective Bidders shall signify performance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184.

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit - One Percent (1%), Bank Guarantee - One and a half percent (1.5%), Surety Bond - Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) LORENZO S. MARCELO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - September 13 & 14, 2004)



PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED FIRST SAVINGS BANK

- The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) will start its operations for the servicing of claims for insured deposits in the closed First Savings Bank (FSB) on Tuesday, September 14, 2004.
- Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the FSB office/branch where they maintained their deposits, which have been designated as payoff sites (please refer to table below). PDIC representatives are stationed at these payoff sites to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors during office hours, Monday to Friday.

The PDIC has designated Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) as its paying agent. Numbers of approved claims that have been turned over by PDIC to LBP shall be posted at the payoff sites. Depositors are therefore requested to refer to these numbers before proceeding to LBP servicing branch for payment of claims.

FSB Office	Payoff Site	LBP Servicing Branch	Duration of Initial Operations
E. Rodriguez Ave. Head Office	288 E. Rodriguez Sr. Blvd., New Manila, Quezon City	G. Aranela	September 14 to 30, 2004
Manila Branch	597 CRB Bldg., EDSA, Cubao, Quezon City	Cubao	September 14 to 30, 2004
Manila Branch	514 Recta Ave., corner Sto. Cristo St., Tondo, Manila	Tayuman	September 14 to October 5, 2004
Manila Branch	Plaza Rizal St., Plaza Aldea Tanay, Rizal	Tanay	September 14 to October 5, 2004

After the said dates, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Claims Counter, 8th Floor, SSS Bldg., Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino St., Makati City, from Monday to Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., or by mail addressed to:

The Officer-in-Charge, Claims Processing Department
Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
1231 Makati City

- Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims:

- Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and/or Certificate of Time Deposits and/or Unused Checks and Latest Bank Statement.
- Two (2) latest identification cards/documents (IDs) with depositor's signature.

Other documents may be required by the PDIC representatives in the course of their processing.

- Pursuant to the provision of R.A. 3591, as amended by R.A. 9302, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed First Savings Bank is on September 7, 2006. After September 7, 2006, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI - September 13 & 14, 2004)

Annika hits stride, zeroes in on crown

Sports remembers 9-11

BROKEN ARROW, Okla.—Annika Sorenstam took a three-stroke lead into the final round of the John Q. Hammons Hotel Classic, shooting a 3-under 68 on Saturday on the demanding Cedar Ridge Country Club course.

The Swedish star, the 2002 winner at Tulsa Country Club who is making her first LPGA Tour start since the Women's British Open in late July, had an 8-under 134 total. England's Joanne Morley was second after a 67.

"I didn't touch a golf club for three weeks. I'm surprised," said Sorenstam, who won the HP Open in Sweden on Aug. 8 in her last tournament appearance.

Sorenstam, seeking her fifth LPGA Tour win of the season and 53rd of her career, had a strong ball-striking day, hitting 16 greens in regulation and finishing with four birdies



SORENSTAM

and a bogey.

"I really wasn't in trouble, that's the key here, hitting fairways, hitting greens," Sorenstam said. "I've got to continue to do that. Anything can happen on this course."

Johanna Head (69), Karen Stupples (70) and Shi Hyun Ahn (73) were five strokes back at 3 under, and second-round leader Christina Kim (75) was another shot behind along with Kelli Kuehne (72) and Mikaela Pernell (140).

Sorenstam, who began the round a stroke behind Kim, quickly moved to the top of the leaderboard.

Kim hit her third shot into the water en route to a double bogey on the par-5 opening hole to drop into a tie with Sorenstam and Morley at 5 under, and Sorenstam moved ahead with a 10-foot birdie putt on the par-3 second hole.

AP

NEW YORK—On the third anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, the victims were remembered and honored in sporting events around the country and the world.

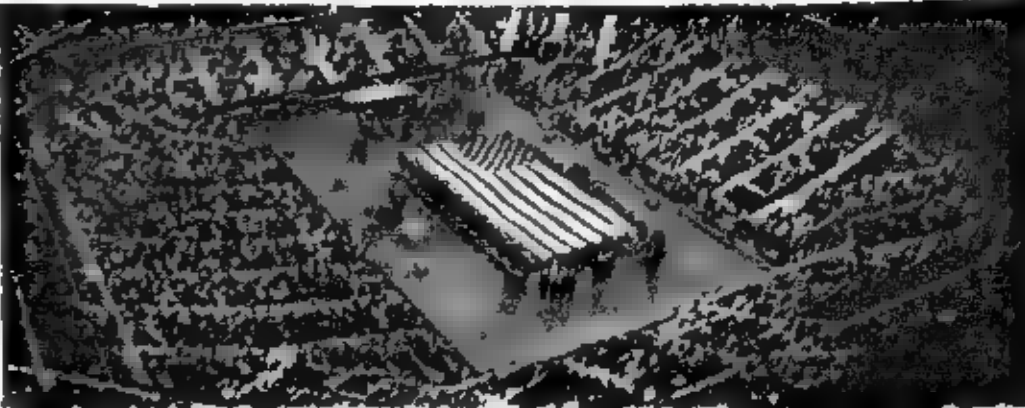
In Baltimore, the New York Yankees wore commemorative hats with an American flag on the side during their game against the Orioles.

"It seems that you can say that it's only three years, and yet it seems like yesterday and yet it seems like it's been with us our whole life," Yankees manager Joe Torre said Saturday.

In Valencia, Spain, Olympic gold-medalist cyclist Tyler Hamilton marked the anniversary after his time trial win at the Spanish Vuelta. During an interview with a Spanish television station, he dedicated his win to the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

At the US Open in New York, a tribute to the city's police and fire departments was held between the second and third set of the men's semifinal between Lleyton Hewitt and Joachim Johansson.

Saturday evening's women's final began on a somber note, with spectators joining in a moment of silence to remember victims of Sept. 11, 2001, and the recent terrorist attack at a school in Russia. Svetlana Kuznetsova and Elena Dementieva both wore black ribbons in memory of the hundreds of Russian victims, and they



A FLAG is unfurled before the US Open women's final as fans hold a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks.

REUTERS

walked out from the locker room wearing blue baseball caps with "FDNY" and "NYPD" to honor New York's police and fire workers. Dementieva asked the crowd to observe another moment of silence after the match.

The New York Mets honored relatives of victims, as well as survivors of the attacks, before their game with Philadelphia at Shea Stadium. AP

Weir takes 3-shot lead

OAKVILLE, Ontario—Mike Weir could not have hit the ball any better.

He can't recall putting any worse.

On a crazy day at the Canadian Open, Weir made only one birdie putt out of 13 good chances—eight of those misses inside 18 feet—but still managed to increase his lead by three shots in his bid to become the first Canadian in 50 years to win his national championship.

"I could tell things weren't happening," Weir said after a 1-under 70. "Sometimes you've got to wait for it. And I had to wait for 18 holes."

The only birdie putt he made Saturday at Glen Abbey came at a good time—a 6-footer on the 18th that gave him a three-shot lead over Vijay Singh, Jesper Parnevik and Cliff Kresge.

AP

Shaq cuts record

LOS ANGELES—The way Shaquille O'Neal sees it, he soars higher than Kobe Bryant, and he's got the rap to back it up. And the Miami Heat center isn't crazy about Detroit Pistons center Ben Wallace, either.

O'Neal's latest rap album effort is a CD entitled "Hot in Here Part Five."

On "You Not The Fightin' Type," O'Neal sets out to even scores with Bryant, who he believes got him traded from the Los Angeles Lakers, and Wallace, whose Pistons defeated the Lakers for this year's NBA championship.

"I heard your little interview and what Ben Wallace said. I ain't got no response for spider-web head," O'Neal raps.

"Even with wings you never as fly as me," he continues. "You remind me of Kobe Bryant trying to be as high as me." AP

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SPORTS

At his best, Federer's unbeatable

NEW YORK—In heat or wind, before a crowd for or against him, facing Andre Agassi's baseline bashing or Tim Henman's get-to-the-net style: When Roger Federer is on his game, it doesn't seem to matter what he has to deal with.

Now Lleyton Hewitt of Australia will try to disrupt him.

The top-ranked Federer moved within a victory of becoming the first man since 1988 to win three Grand Slam tournaments in a year, beating No. 5 Henman, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, Saturday in the US Open semifinals.

"I feel very confident out on the court," Federer said. "It's important that every day,

I wake up, I'm 100 percent into tennis and ready to go."

In Sunday's final, Federer will play 2001 US Open champion Hewitt, who was nearly flawless himself in eliminating No. 28 Joachim Johansson of Sweden, 6-4, 7-5, 6-3. As Hewitt scrambled along the baseline, getting to everything Johansson offered, his sneakers squeaked with each step, sounding like high-pitched bird chirps.

It was the first time since 1986 that no Americans were in the men's semifinals at the US Open.

Only three players have more than five career wins over Federer, and two are Hen-

man (now 6-3 against the Swiss star) and Hewitt (8-5). Asked what weaknesses of Federer's he'll try to exploit, Hewitt said: "I don't know. There's not a lot of them."

The crowds at the Open love an underdog, and Henman got more positive energy Saturday than he normally does at Wimbledon, where he's hounded by the pressure of a nation looking for a British champion.

The fans tried to will him past Federer, who silenced them by conjuring twice as many winners (31) as unforced errors (15). AP

Russian teen bags US Open

NEW YORK—By all rights, Svetlana Kuznetsova should have been a cycling star: Her brother and parents all won or coached others to Olympic medals and world titles in that sport. Kuznetsova gave it a shot, hated it, and moved on to tennis.

What a brilliant career move. Still just 19, with braces on her teeth, she's the US Open champion, the third straight Russian woman to win a major.

Pounding ferocious forehands and covering the baseline with the muscular legs of a Tour de France rider, Kuznetsova overwhelmed Elena Dementieva, 6-3, 7-5, Saturday night in the American Grand Slam's first all-Russian final.

"When I played the first game, I was, 'Wow, there are so many people out here.' I was nervous," said Kuznetsova, never past the quarterfinals at a major before. "This morning, I was nervous. I was stiff. But something inside of me was telling me I would be fine."

As of four months ago, no Russian woman had ever won a major, but Anastasia Myskina beat Dementieva in the French Open final, and Maria Sharapova won Wimbledon. Russians occupy half of the top 10 spots in the rankings.

"Russia is just a powerful country," said

Kuznetsova, the youngest Open champion since Serena Williams was 17 in 1999. "There's competition between us."

Until now, Kuznetsova probably was the least-known of her country's crop of rising stars, instead most famous for being Martina Navratilova's former doubles partner. They won five titles as a pair and were the runners-up at the 2003 Open.

How anonymous is Kuznetsova? After a practice session 1 1/2 hours before the match, she walked across the National Tennis Center grounds without getting asked for autographs or photos. She might as well have been another fan waiting for the US Open final to start.

Saturday evening began on a somber note, with 20,524 spectators joining in a moment of silence to remember victims of Sept. 11, 2001, and the recent terrorist attack at a school in Russia.

"It's a great day for me as a tennis player," Dementieva said. "It's a day to remember. You lost hundreds of people on Sept. 11, 2001—Sept. 1, 2004, we lost hundreds of children."

SVETLANA KUZNETSOVA reaches new heights with her US Open triumph.

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MEMORIES OF AN UNDERDOG

A jin's rough road to victory

By Ali Atienza

JAN. 30, 1994. Afternoon. It was hot. Inside the full-packed Ninoy Aquino Stadium, sweat came down my face and body as I rested, having barged into the quarterfinals of the prestigious Asian Taekwondo Championships welterweight division. I had just outpointed an awkward but tough Kuwaiti.

All warmed up, again ready to do battle, I felt the rush of adrenaline pumping through my veins. I had mixed feelings of pride, excitement and anxiety when I heard organizers call me to the center court. I could feel the roar of the delighted hometown crowd.

I was the last Filipino standing in Asia's toughest competition wherein Korea, the world's taekwondo hotbed, was at the helm. To add to my restiveness, I was up against Kim Kyong Hun, an imposing and towering 6-foot-7 Korean, the reigning Asian champion who would later win an Olympic gold. I was barely 21 years old then, 6 feet and a neophyte in the Asian level.

I was hit with a long combination of lower roundhouse kicks, so strong I felt the Korean's overwhelming power penetrate through my armor and to my ribs. I was hurt and intimidated but I overcame fear. I tried to shun pain.

As I furiously chased him all over the court, he fought back fiercely. I was down, 3-2, at the end of the second. But as the final round started, I mustered all my strength and courage and threw an endless flurry of kicks, hitting the surprised Korean who was now on the defen-



ATIENZA

as if I had just won the gold. The win had assured the Philippine team of at least a bronze medal but, nevertheless, it was just sweet as gold because I was the first Filipino ever to beat a Korean in the sport.

My next bout was against a talented but inexperienced Vietnamese. Having beaten a Korean, more so an Asian champion, I felt confident that no one could stop me from reaching the finals. And I did as I breezed through the young jin from Ho Chi Minh City to be assured of at least a silver.

As the crowd and the Philippine team rejoiced, the other side of the bracket would reveal that I was on a collision course with a two-time World Championships silver medalist from Chinese Taipei for the ultimate battle.

A tremendous roundhouse kick by the Taiwanese threw off my headgear out of the court and almost knocked me to the mat. He was damn good, but I came fully prepared and had set my sights only on the gold.

sive. The cheer of the crowd was deafening.

It was the toughest fight of my life, but against all odds, I prevailed against the stunned Kim, 5-3, as the crowd roared to the center court and tossed me with my arms raised in victory

I was down, 3-2, barely a minute before the end of the bout when he delivered an awkward turning sidekick that missed. He set himself off-balanced.

Having gone through four grueling bouts in a single day, I was extremely exhausted, aching all over. My right foot hurt from the furious exchange, but memories of my childhood days, all the hardships and sacrifice I went through training intensely every single day for more than 10 years, kept flashing back.

The loud cheers of our countrymen chanting "Ali! Ali! Ali!" and the waves of our national flag gave me the extra strength and courage for a final burst of energy. I quickly grabbed the opportunity and hit him with five consecutive lower roundhouse kicks to the side.

After the final buzzer, I was declared winner, 4-3, thereby capturing the title, "Asian champion."

I've decided to share this most memorable experience as a national athlete because I have always believed that hard work, sacrifice, courage, confidence, and the will to win are the keys to success no matter what the odds may be.

It was tough. But pride and the sense of nationalism to give honor and prestige for flag and country are the force and spirit in every athlete's road to victory.

(Ali Atienza, the first Filipino to win a gold medal in the Asian Taekwondo Championships, is head of the Manila Sports Council, the sports and recreation arm of the Manila city government. He is the youngest son of Mayor Lito Atienza.)

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So, Galan... From page A27

by Singapore with a 5-13-15 harvest.

"Our young players showed they can compete with the best in our region," said Grandmaster Eugene Torre, the man behind the mushrooming of age-group tournaments in the country. "Like what the First Gentleman said, we should start them young."

Len So, Wesley's mother, praised Torre for the success of her son and of the country's other prodigies. "He's (Torre) done a lot to help the kids," she said. Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor Louie C. Camino

Robin prepares daughter for show biz

'I'll be her manager, bodyguard, assistant'

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor

ROBIN Padilla and his wife will help their eldest child, a 13-year-old girl, realize her dream of becoming a movie star like her dad.

"I'll be behind her," Robin said. "I'll be her manager, bodyguard and assistant."

"Now our relationship's getting better," Robin said of his marriage to Lielz Sicangco. "We agree on helping our daughter Queenie to realize her show biz dream."

"Maybe that's how parents are," he added, speaking in Filipino. "They become one when it comes to their children."

A few months ago, Robin was rumored to be having an affair with Judy Ann, his partner on the daily teleserye "Basta't Kasama Kita," which ended last Friday. The rumor prompted his wife, Lielz Sicangco, to call from Australia and air her grief and suspicions on TV shows in Manila. Robin denied the rumor and said he was wooing Lielz again to keep their marriage together.

13-year-old dreamer

According to Robin, their daughter Queenie is bent on following in his footsteps into show biz. He said that when the girl first told her parents of her ambition, Robin was dismayed because he has been spending a lot of money to give Queenie and her siblings a good education in Australia, where Lielz and the children are based.

"But being a father, I can't contra-



KEEPING IT together, Robin fights to preserve his family. RICH PHOTO

dict what she wants to do in life," he said. "I was also 13 when I chased my dream of becoming an actor."

So, when Robin's wife and children come home to Manila in December, during their Australian summer break, Queenie will be able to jumpstart her show biz dream, with the help of her parents.

Robin said Queenie's younger siblings have show biz inclinations, too. "But I told them not to join show business yet," he said. "One at a time. Queenie is the eldest, so she'll do it first."

He said he wants Queenie to be prepared, so she would be taking

lessons in performing. He also advises her to read on the lives of revolutionary figures like Che Guevarra, Fidel Castro and even reggae icon Bob Marley because she'll learn a lot from them, he said.

He said he wanted Queenie to be his conduit to inspire the youth. "People her age wouldn't want to listen to an elder like me," he pointed out.

Role model

He said that during his travels, he saw for himself how Filipinos are discriminated against in foreign airports and he realized that show biz stars should not be content in their comfortable stature and lifestyle.

He admitted to admiring Bono, the vocalist of the Irish band U2, who uses his celebrity to get world leaders to listen to his views on global issues. Bono's numerous causes, including fighting poverty in Africa, won for him the Nobel Peace Prize last February.

Robin said, however, that he was all for the security measures that governments around the world have taken to fight terrorism. "I can't blame them," said the actor, a former Jehovah's Witness who converted to Islam while he was in prison for illegal possession of firearms in the early '90s. "Who's responsible for Sept. 11? It was found to be a group of Arabs. I don't want to call them Muslims because that's not what Muslims do."

"You don't know what's going to happen when you board a plane," he added. "That's why I insist on sitting

ROBIN/A34

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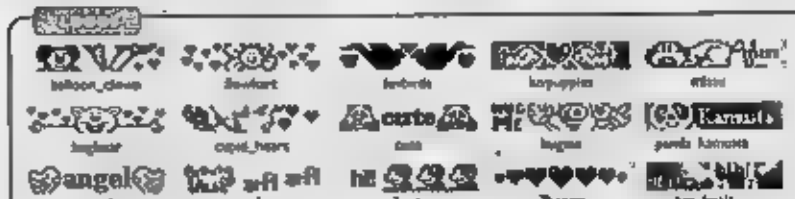
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Miss You	MISS	
Lovely	SAD	
Sorry	SORRY	

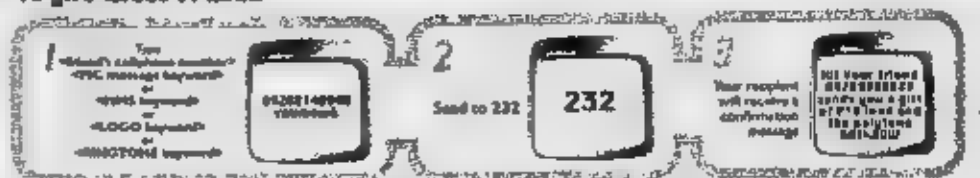


TITLE	MONOTONE KEYWORD	POLYTOKE KEYWORD
Ocho Ocho Pamela Rema	88pamela2	88pamela6
Kaka Di Sabian	88kabih2	88kabih6
This Guy's in Love With You Para	88guypink2	88guypink6
Kaka Kaka	88kaka2	88kaka6
Machonun	88machonun2	88machonun6
Pagpagang Hall	88pagang2	88pagang6
Pamela	88pamela2	88pamela6
Pagpagang Kaka	88pagangk2	88pagangk6
Rainbow	88rainbow2	88rainbow6
San Circle Queen Theme	88starcircle2	88starcircle6
Sungod Sa Galar	88sungod2	88sungod6
Tanging Ina	88tanging2	88tanging6

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Simply Amazing!



ROSELLE NAVA reinvents herself
JIM GUANO PUNZALAN

Roselle Nava, a little more daring /A36

Conflicting reactions to SM's R-18 ban /A35

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movie time CINEMA

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Central		
MEGAMALL	CITY FAIRVIEW	CITY MANILA
1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	1 HAUNTED SPIRIT 2	1 TOOLBOX MURDERS
2 DODGEBALL	2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	2 THE NOTEBOOK
3 THE TERMINAL	3 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	3 PRINCESS DIARIES 2
4 GODSEND	4 ANACONDAS	4 THE TERMINAL
5 TOOLBOX MURDERS	5 GODSEND	5 DODGEBALL
6 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	6 THE NOTEBOOK	6 ANACONDAS
7 HAUNTED SPIRIT 2	7 DODGEBALL	7 GODSEND
8 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	8 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	8 HAUNTED SPIRIT 2
9 THE NOTEBOOK	9 THE TERMINAL	9 ANACONDAS
10 ANACONDAS	10 COLLATERAL	10 I, ROBOT
11 CONNIE AND CARLA	11 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2	11 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
12 LAWS OF ATTRACTION	12 TOOLBOX MURDERS	12 LAWS OF ATTRACTION
North		
CITY NORTH EDSA	CITY STA. MESA	CINEMA TUTUBAN
1 TOOLBOX MURDERS	1 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	1 ANACONDAS
2 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	2 TOOLBOX MURDERS	2 GODSEND
3 THE NOTEBOOK	3 THE TERMINAL	3 THE TERMINAL
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	4 GODSEND	4 TOOLBOX MURDERS
5 THE TERMINAL	5 ANACONDAS	
6 DODGEBALL	6 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	
7 ANACONDAS	7 DODGEBALL	
8 GODSEND	8 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	
	9 THE NOTEBOOK	
	10 COLLATERAL	
South		
CITY MARILAO	CITY PAMPANGA	CITY BAGUIO
1 THE ALAMO	1 ANACONDAS	1 ANACONDAS
2 LAWS OF ATTRACTION	2 CONNIE AND CARLA	2 DEAD PEOPLE
3 ANACONDAS	3 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2	3 THE TERMINAL
4 THUNDERBIRDS	4 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	4 THUNDERBIRDS
	5 LAWS OF ATTRACTION	
	6 THUNDERBIRDS	
Visayas & Mindanao		
CITY LAS PIÑAS	CITY BICUTAN	CITY BACOR
1 DODGEBALL	1 ANACONDAS	1 DODGEBALL
2 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	2 THE TERMINAL	2 THE TERMINAL
3 ANACONDAS	3 DODGEBALL	3 ANACONDAS
4 THE TERMINAL	4 GODSEND	4 TOOLBOX MURDERS
5 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2		5 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
6 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR		6 PRINCESS DIARIES 2
7 TOOLBOX MURDERS		7 THE NOTEBOOK
8 GODSEND		8 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
9 THE NOTEBOOK		
10 HAUNTED SPIRIT 2		
Cebu		
CITY CEBU	CITY ILOILO	CITY DAVAO
1 THE VILLAGE	1 SUPER SIZE ME	1 ANACONDAS
2 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	2 RESERVED	2 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
3 STEPFORD WIVES	3 PRINCESS DIARIES 2	3 THE TERMINAL
4 CONNIE AND CARLA	4 CINDERELLA STORY	4 THE TERMINAL
5 CINDERELLA STORY	5 STEPFORD WIVES	5 THE TERMINAL
6 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2	6 RING: THE SPIRAL	6 THE TERMINAL
7 LAWS OF ATTRACTION	7 RESERVED	7 THE TERMINAL
8 ANACONDAS	8 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	8 THE TERMINAL
Cagayan de Oro		
CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO		
1 PRINCESS DIARIES 2		
2 WEREWOLF: GINGERSNAPS 2		
3 GARFIELD		
4 WHOLE 10 YARDS		

ENTERTAINMENT SEPTEMBER 13, 2004

September music menu at Dish

The Terminal
A sweet and delicious comedy. It's the tale of a man who gets stuck in an airport.

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WALK THE TERMINAL...
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THIS September, Dish ushers in a wave of something new, something old, something different and something for everyone, plus good food and its new location on the ground floor of the ELJ Communications Center, ABS Compound, Quezon City.

All Wednesdays of September are "Yabba-dabba-doo" times with a retro feel as the indefatigable Flintstones hold court. This band has people, young and old alike, jumping up and dancing to the music.

Sept. 16 is a special Star Records night as Divo returns with Sheryn Regis. On Sept. 23, the night begins with a special Sergio Mendes-inspired set from Passage, and R & B singer Nina returns. Sept. 30 offers new Star Records artist Michele Ayala joining Divo.

Fridays have eye candy as well as talent nights. On Sept. 24, the Akafelas open the night. The group recently garnered the Aliw Award for Best Group Vocal Performance.

New singer Jeni Hernandez performs on Thursdays, proving there's more to her than the hosting and dancing that she does on "MTB (Magandang Tanghali Bayan)." On Sept. 17, it's the ever popular Freestyle, and alternative icon Barbie's Cradle.

On Sept. 18, it's Side A with another Aliw awardee, Karel Marquez, this year's Best New Female Artist. And a week later, Sept. 25, Side A returns, this time with Barbie's Cradle.

Reserve Mondays, Sept. 13 and 27, for easy listening acoustic nights. Aduarte, a trio of a female vocalist and two very adept musicians, rearrange songs from the '80s and '90s to help us chase away those Monday blues.

On Sept. 20, a special night of drop-dead gorgeous male and female models is offered by Black Book.

Tuesdays, Sept. 14 and 20, find Route 70 singing songs from yesteryears. Sept. 28 features a special performance by Lance Raymundo, supported by Silver.

Robin prepares daughter...

From page A33

just behind the pilot when I travel. When there's someone out to do a crazy thing, he has to kill me first before he can get to the pilot. And I'm not going down without putting up a fight."

For now, Robin fights to keep his family together.

Robin said that before his wife and children came home to the Philippines on vacation, he will first bring them on a tour of historical places in Italy, Greece and Egypt, courtesy of Smart, which he endorses.

He laughed out loud when asked if he and Liza would have another honeymoon. "It's my trap for her," he said, still laughing.

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

GENIUS 1pm THE NOTEBOOK 2pm THE TERMINAL 3pm PRINCESS DIARIES 2 4pm DODGEBALL 5pm ANACONDAS 6pm THE TERMINAL 7pm ANACONDAS 8pm TOOLBOX MURDER 9pm TAG-INT 10pm THE TERMINAL 11pm DODGEBALL	FILINVEST 1pm GODSEND 2pm ANACONDAS 3pm THE TERMINAL 4pm DODGEBALL 5pm THE NOTEBOOK 6pm THE TERMINAL 7pm ANACONDAS 8pm TOOLBOX MURDER 9pm HAUNTED SPIRIT 10pm PRINCESS DIARIES 2	EASTWOOD CINEMAS 1pm THE NOTEBOOK 2pm THE TERMINAL 3pm DODGEBALL 4pm ANACONDAS
SUPER CINERAMA 1pm TOOLBOX MURDER 2pm ANACONDAS 3pm TAG-INT 4pm THE TERMINAL 5pm DODGEBALL	GOTOSCO GRAND CENTRAL 1pm UNDERWORLD 2pm MAGADALAGA 3pm TAG-INT 4pm THE TERMINAL 5pm DODGEBALL 6pm ANACONDAS 7pm RESERVE 8pm RESERVE	THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT 1pm BULLETS 2pm ANACONDAS 3pm THE TERMINAL 4pm STEPFORD WIVES
Maragana CINEMA 1pm THE TERMINAL 2pm ANACONDAS 3pm TAG-INT	st small Movies 1pm RESERVE 2pm RESERVE 3pm TAG-INT 4pm ANACONDAS 5pm GODSEND	4 MALL CINEPLEX 1pm ANACONDAS 2pm THE TERMINAL 3pm DODGEBALL 4pm TOOLBOX MURDER 5pm GODSEND
METROPOLIS 1pm YOUNG VIRGIN 2pm TAG-INT 3pm TOOLBOX MURDER 4pm GODSEND 5pm ANACONDAS 6pm DODGEBALL	Cine Nepo 1pm ELLA ENCHANTED 2pm AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS 3pm ANACONDAS 4pm STEPFORD WIVES	Mega Center Mall 1pm SPIRAL 2pm THE CINDERELLA STORY 3pm ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 4pm HOUSE OF THE DEAD
st small Movies 1pm ANACONDAS 2pm BOLD AFFAIR	Cine Nepo 1pm DEAD PEOPLE 2pm WEREWOLF (GINGER SNAP-2) 3pm CONNIE & CARLA 4pm ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	Fiesta World Ma 1pm SURUM 2pm DODGEBALL 3pm HAMOG 4pm PRINCESS DIARIES-2
Centre Plaza Cinema 1pm THE CINDERELLA STORY 2pm STEPFORD WIVES	Berna Cinema 1pm TAG-INT 2pm ANACONDAS	

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

THE PODIUM

1 THE TERMINAL
11:50 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/ 8:20/10:30 LFS/ 11:00 LMF/1:10 END

2 DODGEBALL
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/ 8:50/10:25 LFS/ 11:00 LMF/12:35 END

For Seat Reservation, call 633 8976
LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

Critics' CHOICE

USA

AN SM CINEMA EXCLUSIVE

THE ALAMO

Death Quail (The Bay After Tomorrow) stars in this movie, set in the spring of 1836. Nearly 200 Texans - some of all races who believed in the future of Texas - held the fort for 13 days under siege by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, ruler of Mexico and commander of his forces. Led by brave men - the young Irish Aid William Travis, the stoic, handsome James Bowie, and the larger than life, living legend David Crockett - the Texans and their stock at the Alamo would pass into history as the last stand of the Republic of Texas. The movie is a tribute to the brave men who died for their noble cause.

Showing on
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SM City Cagayan de Oro
MFC Davao City
For Screening information, call 633 8976

Conflicting reactions

THE DECISION not to show R-18 movies with excessive sex and violence on SM malls' cineplex film screens has elicited conflicting reactions. Most concerned viewers approve, while sexy actresses loudly protest their potential loss of job offers.

Some movie people say the ban could lead to the death of the local film industry, while others point out that what it would "kill" would only be the production of tacky porno movies.

For our part, we've stated that exceptions should be made to the "no R-18" rule, for substantial and non-exploitative films for mature audiences.

Lately, we've heard this view being repeated even by the MTRCB head, so we trust that it will gain favor with the SM malls' executives.

This early, the rule has already had an effect on producers of sexy movies. Some of them have been heard to say they now intend to

make less cheapie-tacky-quickie-sleazy flicks, with the view in mind of getting only an R-13 classification from the MTRCB. They hope that these better-produced and less graphic movies will pass muster with the SM bosses, and everyone will be the better for it.

All's well that ends well? But wait, there's more:

Since 48 of the 71 movies produced here last year were sex-oriented, and fewer of those films will be made this year (perhaps 20 less?), what other film formats should take their place?

Unknown to most people, a study has been quietly conducted that evaluates the most popular local films produced in the past couple of years, and the major finding is that Filipino viewers now prefer to watch movies about young families.

This confirms the view that, with the times so troubled and confusing, many Filipinos are yearning

VIEWFINDER

Neslor U. Torre



for clearer insights about life, and to go back to the old, reliable family-oriented values.

Since the country's median population is young, this translated into the desire of viewers to watch movies about young families, hence the perceived popularity of that film format.

In addition, it has been observed that the TV telenovelas featuring Asian stars have become even more popular than their Spanish and Latin-American predecessors used to be, so this could also translate into popularity on the big screen, if like-minded movie projects are conceptualized, filmed and shown.

What do all these observations mean? Sexy flicks are out, and youthful family dramas and Asia-oriented movies could take their place.

So, scriptwriters and directors, get to work!

Trouble is, it'll be difficult for heretofore sex-focused film workers to suddenly and convincingly turn "GP" and "PG" overnight.

So, they'll have their work cut out for them to believably "reform and transform" themselves to keep up with the rapidly changing film times.

Feedback

FROM Ma. Lourdes Quintan of Makati City: "I have always enjoyed your insights and comments. I feel you are the only columnist who bothers to criticize TV shows but does not forget to commend those that are worth watching."

"Were you able to watch 'Born Diva' on Channel 2? The initial

telecast was disappointing. I can't believe the judges voted against the more talented singer. In that talent search, surgical improvements mattered over talent per se. But, the singing contest proper proved Gracel Salcedo was more deserving to win."

"By the way, what's Rene Salud doing in a talent search program? And why is Angeli Pangilinan allowing the show to propagate surgical enhancement over God-given talent?"

CCP outreach silver year

2004 is the 25th year of the CCP's Outreach & Exchange Program, and the celebration includes the national tour of "Magno Rubio," a play on Filipino migrants in the United States. The show is being toured until Oct. 5 at FEU-Manila, Baguio, Cebu, Roxas, Sigma and Buladnon.

"Saliwan," a regional artists and cultural workers forum will be held

in Koronadal City (Sept. 29), Cagayan de Oro City (Oct. 9), Iloilo City (Nov. 27) and Bulacan (Dec. 11).

The main highlight of the "Plak" anniversary celebration is a grand production, "Pinilakang Sirang ng Bagong Henerasyon," featuring prominent local artists and groups.

Performances are slated at Koronadal (Oct. 1), Cagayan de Oro (Oct. 8-9), Iloilo (Nov. 26) and Malolos, Bulacan (Dec. 10). Call 833-0267, or e-mail outreach@culturalcenter.gov.ph.

'Easy English' seminar

CORBAN Daycare and Tutorial Center will hold an Easy English seminar starting from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sept. 18 and 25. The seminar will be held for 10 consecutive Saturdays, totaling 30 hours. It will focus on English conversation, grammar, vocabulary building and pronunciation. Call 842-6665 and 0917-6297718.



SUGARFREE. "Dramachine"

Sugarfree album party

SUGARFREE'S highly anticipated second album, "Dramachine," the follow-up to the commercial and critical hit, "Sa Wakas," is now available.

The new CD contains 12 new tunes, all in Filipino.

The album will be launched tonight, Sept. 13, starting at 8 p.m., at Off the Grill along Timog Avenue in Quezon City. The launch party is for free and will be opened by rock stalwarts The Dawn and Sandwich. It is presented by EMI Philippines Inc., PolyEast Records and Levi's Strauss.

The album title, "Dramachine," is the brainchild of album co-producer Raymond Marasigan and Camilo's Diego Mapa.

From the sad "Kuwarto," to the self-flagellating "Haring Sablay," to remembering prom nights in "Prom" and those nights of conversations as told in "Kuwentuhan," Sugarfree takes on subjects common to everyone in "Dramachine."

The album also has "Tao," "Martir," and the first single, "Sinta."

"Sinta" is currently at the top of NU 107's Top 12 countdown. A love song of sorts, "Sinta" was written by Ebe when he had no girlfriend. He also contributed 10 more songs to the 13-track album. Two songs are by Jai Taguibao.

The album launch will coincide with the band's fifth anniversary.

Sugarfree has Ebe Dances on vocals and guitars, Jai Taguibao on bass, and Mitch Singson on drums. The band burst into the mainstream in 2002 with "Mariposa," "Telepono," "Hintay" and "Burnout." Their debut album, "Sa Wakas," sold out in 11 minutes during its launch at the Freedom Bar.

The band won the Best New Artist and the Album of the Year

awards in NU 107's Rock Awards in 2003.

What viewers love to watch, and weep over

By Amy Mosura Contributor

IF YOU'RE you're going to judge the AGB TV ratings from January to August 2004, what makes Filipinos happy is also what makes them cry.

In the first week of July, most of the country's TV-watching population rushed home to catch the stunning finale of ABS-CBN's teleserye "Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas." The much-anticipated finale had the answer to the question fans had been asking since February: Which of the main characters Ara (Kristine Hermosa), Christian

(Jencho Rosales), Leo (Dierher Ocampo) and Mary Anne (Angelika dela Cruz) would end up together? Millions voted for a wedding for Ara and Christian.

When the final episode aired on July 9, "Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas" finished with a huge 48.3 percent in the Mega Manila area. An audience share of 65.2 percent meant more than half of the homes watching TV that evening were watching "SWNW."

Even the alternate ending, which showed Ara and Leo getting married, was a smash when it was shown the next evening, chalking up a 34.6 per-

cent rating. Overall, it earned a 37.8 percent average rating in the first half of the year.

The expensive epic story of the mermaid Marina opened in February, the very first fantaserye. The average rating of "Marina" was 41.4 percent in the first eight months of 2004, making it the country's most consistently high-rating prime time soap.

With a cast consisting of Kris Aquino, Dina Bonnevie, John Estrada and Heart Evangelista, it's no surprise that "Hiram" is no slouch in the ratings department, earning a 36.7 percent rating in only its first month and a half of broadcast.

Putting two superstars together is

the winning formula behind the country's only action-drama teleserye, "Basta't Kasama Kita," which opened in May 2003 with Robin Padilla and Judy Ann Santos. From January to August, "Basta't Kasama Kita" averaged a 36.5 percent rating, and it's only getting stronger.

The country's favorite new love team, John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo, continue their winning streak with their second consecutive hit teleserye, "It Might Be You," following their debut in "Kay Tagal Kang Hinuntay." Their love story continues to lure viewers of all ages, with the soap earning an average rating of 34.5 percent in the first eight months of 2004.

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Sa P28 lang bawat araw, masisiguro mo ang magandang kinabukasan ng iyong pamilya—sa PHILAM PLANS PANGARAP PENSION PLAN! Kumpleto ang mga features ng PHILAM PLANS PANGARAP kaya angkop sa inyong pangangailangan!

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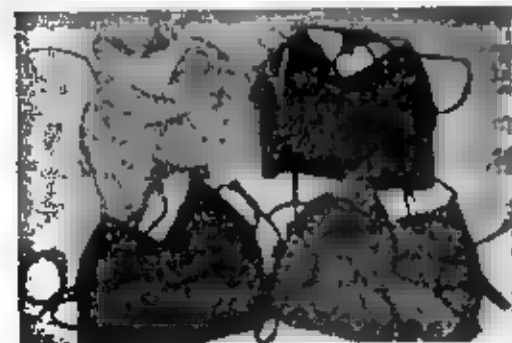
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ENTERTAINMENT



'SENTI' STUFF: She keeps a Bulgari watch and a Thai urn because of their sentimental value.



ALL FOR SHOWS: Beaded and sequined tops she wears in her shows.



WITH WHIM of things, the homebody swims and turns her bathroom into a spa.



SWEET to sexy: Roselle in the BCBG halter dress that "clings to the skin"

ROSELLE, a little more daring

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Ponzalan

SINGER Roselle Nava, like a rare few others in show business, has a college degree.

Roselle is a marketing graduate of De La Salle University on Taft Avenue. She first joined show business when she was 16, as one of the teeners on ABS-CBN's daily youth show "Ang TV." Shortly after, Roselle signed a record deal with Ivory Records. She then transferred to Star Records, an affiliate of ABS-CBN.

"Now, I'm with Viva Records," she says. "I'm on my sixth album." She released her latest album last March and is busy promoting its carrier single, "Makakaya Ko Ba?"

While Roselle admits that she once thought of quitting school because of her heavy load in show business, she says she was glad her dad Ramon Nava did not let her.

"There was a time when I became so super busy with work and school that I'd cry," she says during this interview in the Nava house in San Pedro, Laguna. "I only went to school every Tuesday and Thursday, but I was there for almost 12 hours, taking up six subjects. It was really tough because I had a break of only an hour and a half. Fortunately, my parents and friends were very supportive."

Roselle now says proper time management is the key to balancing work and school. "I'd bring my books to my tapings. I'd read them backstage, especially if I had exams the next day. It was a lot of hard work, but it was all worth it."

She says she enjoyed her Marketing classes because of her show biz work. "I see myself as the product that I should market. I always think of ways to reinvent myself, to make myself more interesting. Before, I had a teenybopper image. Now my songs are more mature. Even my clothes now are a little more daring and sexy."

She is promoting her new single in mall shows and provincial tours. She's also scheduled to do a show in Korea with Ogie Alcasid this month, and "hopefully, another show in



FIT AND DRY: Roselle goes to the gym in her dry-fit Nike tops and rubber shoes

OUT OF THE CLOSET

the States before the year ends."

When Roselle is not busy in show biz, she loves to stay home. "I'm a homebody," she says. "I wake up between 7 and 9 a.m. to go to the gym. On normal days, I watch TV, read a book or swim in our pool. Sometimes, I go to the market and ask the helps to cook with me."

Roselle's room on the second floor of the three-story house has its own bathroom and walk-in closet. Big glass-paneled sliding doors lead to a private gym and a balcony that overlooks the swimming pool.

"I spend a lot of time in my bathroom," she says. "This is my private spa. I light candles, have a bubble and whirlpool bath. I read my favorite books and magazines there."

Cosmetics. "I use Obagi for my face and Ivory soap or Johnson's milk bath for my body. I also like Canus Goat's Milk skin care products. There's this new scent from Gap that I really like. It's called Heaven. I have it in lotion, shower gel and cologne."

Books. "Right now, I like the 'Shopaholic' series by Sophie Kinsella. I can relate to her. I love to shop. I find it really funny how she justifies her buying stuff that she doesn't need."

Tops. "This yellow shirt was given to me by a family friend from Japan. I'm not really into animal prints, but this is an exemption. I like the color, girly kasi. The fabric looks nice, too. You can pair it with jeans and high-heeled sandals and it's ready for a night out with friends."

"This is from Mango. It's super sexy. I bought this because I liked the color combination, black and white."

"I got this one from Bebe during one of my trips to the States. It can be worn in different ways. It looks good as a tube top and as a halter top."

"On normal days, I like wearing either plain white or black shirts. But for shows, I buy lots of tank tops when I travel. Most of them are fully-beaded and sequined. It's hard to buy clothes for shows here, marami kasing kapareho."

Jackets. "My current favorite is a denim jacket from Mango in Japan. I like it because it's stretchable. It makes you look sexy even when you wear it with a jacket."

"Another favorite is from Morgan. My aunt gave this to me. It's very warm and is best worn abroad."

Pants. "Freego provides most of my jeans. I also wear a lot of Levi's. But this one from Diesel is special, from my best friend's mom. I first wore it during the pictorial for my first concert in 2000. I got depressed when a pen I had placed in one of the back pockets leaked and stained it. I frayed it with a razor so I could still use it. I'm kind of sentimental. It's hard for me to give away stuff that I consider special to me."

Dresses. "My current favorite is from the States. I felt I hit the jackpot because I got this BCBG dress for only \$100. If you go to Rustan's you'll find that dresses like this are

worth P20,000 up. The color makes you look thin. It's backless. It's sexy, but the fabric clings to your skin so it's not too revealing."

Gym outfits. "Before, you would hardly see me wearing sporty outfits. I've been going to the gym a lot for more than a year and a half now. I want my rubber shoes to match my top, socks and bag. I like Nike items."

"I prefer wearing dry-fit shirts when I work out. You don't feel too sticky when you perspire."

Shoes. "I find it difficult to buy shoes that fit me well. I'm semi flatfooted kasi. The most comfortable shows I have are my Nike Spirdon running shoes. I think this is the lightest pair of running shoes from Nike. You can't find this here. Nike sells them for men only. I also like rubber shoes from Skechers, which I endorse."

"I like high heels because I'm short. My favorite are my black Nine West strapped sandals. I liked the design so much that I bought another pair in brown."

Favorite bag. "I like Coach bags, but this one from Ferragamo is special because it's the first expensive bag I bought."

Sleepwear. "I'm a pajama girl. Before, when I traveled, I made sure my pajamas matched my upper garment. Now I pair my pajamas with sandals or baby tees. I also have boxers. Too bad I can't show you my Scooby Doo shorts right now because I can't find them."

Swimwear. "I don't like swimsuits that are too high. I have two-piece suits but I'm not too comfortable wearing them. I like Speedo, Romy Girl and B-labong."

Perfumes. "Romance from Ralph Lauren is my all-time favorite. But now, I'm using Light Blue from D&G because it milder and more suitable for everyday use."



ALL-TIME FAVORITES: Her favorite Nine West pair, favorite Diesel jeans and favorite Bebe top

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7-mo. investments surge 493% to P145B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TOTAL investments approved in the first seven months surged by 493 percent due in part to increased ventures in the manufacturing sector, the Department of Trade and Industry reported.

DTI documents showed that the Board of Investments and Philippine Economic Zone Authority approved from January to July projects valued at P145 billion.

During the period, the BOI gave the go-ahead to projects worth P116.5 billion, or an improvement of 858.4 percent from P12.12 billion in the year-ago period.

At the same time, Peza approved a total of P28.4 billion worth of projects, an increase of 131 percent from P12.3 billion.

For the month of July, total investment commitments slid one percent to P4 billion from P4.04 billion in the same month last year.

The BOI approved P2.8 billion in investments, a decrease of 6.7 percent from P3 billion in the same month last year.

However, Peza approved P1.2 billion in July, up 16 percent from the year-ago figure of P1.02 billion.

Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said in a statement the 26 projects approved in July were expected to create 2,566 additional jobs once these were operating fully.

The biggest investment was Logical Design Inc.'s P2.8-billion communications and coordinating center, First Sunind Circuits Inc.'s P272.8-million flexible printed circuit manufacturing plant, and Air Liquide Pipeline Util-

ties Services Inc.'s P182.9-million air separation facility.

Purisima said foreign investors pledged P3.8 billion in July, double the P1.9 billion registered in the same month in 2003.

Total foreign investments in the first seven months shot up by 767 percent to P127.1 billion from P14.7 billion in the same period last year.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said that while investments in the energy sector continued to account for bulk of committed projects, projects in the manufacturing sector have increased and diversified.

"Companies in the electronics, metals and pharmaceutical businesses are making the country a platform of their manufacturing activities," Hernandez said. "They are taking advantage of the incentives given by the government."

He said manufacturing firms accounted for three out of five jobs created in the first seven months, which reached 40,000.

Hernandez, who is also BOI managing head, said the agency aimed at bringing in more manufacturing firms because these created more jobs and valuable technology that the country needed to industrialize.

RP seeks deal with US on remittances

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES is forging a bilateral agreement with the United States to relax banking requirements for overseas Filipino workers.

The proposal is aimed at encouraging OFWs to send money to their families in the Philippines through the banking system, and not through underground channels, to beef up the country's dollar reserves.

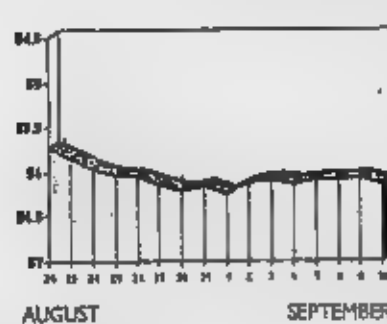
The government believes that many OFWs still prefer sending money outside of the traditional banking channels.

Finance Secretary Juanita Amato said that talks between the Philippine and the US governments were ongoing on the easing of the US banking rules on Filipinos working in the United States. She said what the Philippine government was specifically asking for were the reduction in the banking fees and charges for OFWs, and to allow them to make banking transactions even without

RP/B2

INDICATORS CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 56.14 = \$ 1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 10, 2004

Y 110.09 = \$ 1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 10, 2004

GOLD: \$399.60-400.10
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 10, 2004

September 10, 2004	Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Equivalent
	United States	Dollar	0.819874	1.000000	
	Japan	Yen	0.007473	0.009115	0.5110
	United Kingdom	Pound	1.482327	1.783600	
	Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105 27	0.128223	7.1861
	Switzerland	Franc	0.649045	0.791640	
	Canada	Dollar	0.626498	0.776337	43.5207
	Singapore	Dollar	0.482505	0.588512	32.9914
	Australia	Dollar	0.584496	0.686516	
	Qatar	Riyal	2.174789	2.652590	148.7015
	Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.218628	0.266660	14.9487
	Indonesia	Rupiah	0.481090	0.586786	32.5946
	Thailand	Baht	0.000089	0.000108	0.0061
	UAE	Dirham	0.0 9718	0.024050	1.3482
	Euro	Euro	0.223222	0.272264	15.2626
	Argentina	Peso	1.000000	1.219700	68.3752
	Brazil	Real	0.273064	0.333056	18.6708
	Denmark	Kroner	0.282228	0.344234	19.2974
	India	Rupiah	0.134500	0.164050	9.1965
	Malaysia	Ringgit	0.017742	0.021640	1.2131
	Mexico	New Peso	0.215785	0.263193	14.7543
	New Zealand	Dollar	0.070794	0.086348	4.8406
	Norway	Kroner	0.533320	0.650491	36.4659
	South Africa	Rand	0.120678	0.147191	8.2514
	Sweden	Kroner	0.013957	0.017036	0.9550
	Syria	Pound	0.123036	0.150067	8.4126
	Taiwan	New Dollar	0.000716	0.000873	0.0489
	Venezuela	Bolivar	0.109823	0.133951	7.5092
			0.015907	0.019402	1.0877
			0.024271		1.6595
			0.009428	0.000522	0.0293

STOCK MARKET

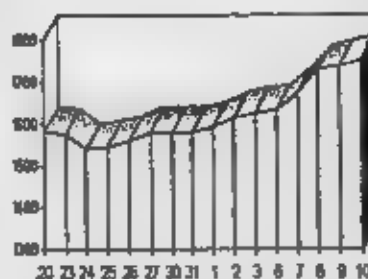
Profit-taking seen

THE STOCK market may surrender some of its gains this week as traders and analysts said many issues could be ripe for profit-taking.

"Although we are worried about a sharp correction, it seems unlikely that a major correction would happen considering the strong volume that has accompanied the market's rally. Volume has been driven primarily by foreign institutions, who are most likely buying long and not trading," said Davis Vistan of AB Capital Securities Inc. said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite Index broke four-year record highs as it spiked 124 points or 7.6 percent to 1,751.50 last week.

Traders were mixed as they said the market's bull run was brought by expectations of better third-quarter corporate earnings and the government's serious efforts to plug the budget deficit.



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has tightened its rules on credit card collection following snowballing complaints about the "unfair" practices of some banks.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes told reporters the new rules were meant to "avoid criticisms on collections."

Among the complaints swamping the BSP were those on the foreign exchange conversion rates for credit card purchases made abroad as well as harassment and intimidation employed by banks against past-due account holders.

In some cases, banks outsource the collection of past-due ac-

counts to companies whose people use harsh tactics, which sometimes end up disgracing the account holders.

Reyes said the new rules now required prior disclosure of the foreign exchange conversion rate for credit card transactions.

Also, he said the rules would define what constituted "unfair collection practices."

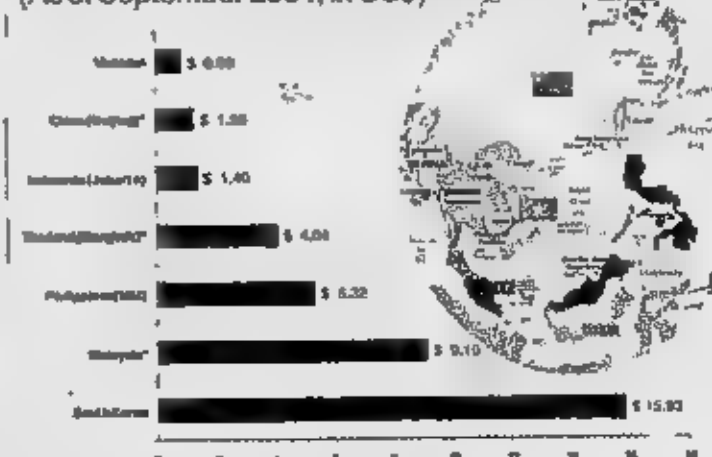
The BSP has likewise included quasi-bank and bank affiliates with credit card operations in the coverage of the rules on collection.

Previously, the BSP slapped tighter guidelines for the collection of delinquency charges and parameters for suspension, termination and reactivation of

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Figures that matter in our nation's life

Wages in selected Asian countries
(As of September 2004, in US\$)



*Used the upper limit in the range of wages

Source: Department of Labor and Employment

WORKERS in Metro Manila enjoy a higher daily minimum wage than their counterparts in Vietnam, Beijing, Jakarta and Bangkok. But the current pay is still deemed insufficient by labor groups and the two legislators who sought a P125 (\$2.20) across-the-board wage hike.

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Page 61, RP 9 September 13, 2004 Section B2

Chevrolet Optra 1.6 LS M/T

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15%	49,067	33,801	26,672	19,159	15,412	13,208	
20%	46,078	31,853	25,047	17,992	14,473	12,493	
25%	43,090	29,905	23,423	16,825	13,535	11,599	
30%	40,102	27,957	21,796	15,658	12,597	10,793	
35%	37,114	26,009	20,170	14,491	11,658	9,988	
40%	34,126	24,061	18,543	13,324	10,719	9,041	
45%	31,138	22,113	16,915	12,156	9,781	8,176	
50%	28,150	20,165	15,287	10,988	8,842	7,374	

Chevrolet Optra 1.6 LS A/T

SRP	P70,000	12	18	24	36	48	60
15%	52,102	35,877	28,319	20,343	16,365	14,025	
20%	49,114	33,929	26,599	19,107	15,370	13,172	
25%	46,126	31,981	24,879	17,870	14,375	12,319	
30%	43,138	29,933	23,159	16,634	13,381	11,466	
35%	40,150	27,985	21,439	15,397	12,386	10,613	
40%	37,162	26,037	19,719	14,161	11,391	9,760	
45%	34,174	24,089	17,992	12,924	10,397	8,907	
50%	31,186	22,141	16,271	11,688	9,402	8,054	



RP joins China-Asean early harvest program

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY is finally joining China's early harvest program for Southeast Asian nations after the government agreed to include 208 agricultural products for tariff cuts, according to Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar V. Purisma.

China initiated the EHP in 2003 in preparation to an Asean-China Free Trade Area by 2010. It gives Asean products an advance low tariff entry to the Chinese market on

condition that the Asean markets will also be opened to Chinese products.

Implemented since the start of this year, China and the EHP participants have cut tariffs on covered products to a range of 2 to 15 percent. The rates will be reduced further to a range of 0 to 5 percent in 2007 and will be completely removed by 2010.

The Philippine government had refused to participate in the program when it was first offered by China in 2003, as it wanted to include only 177 of the 208 agricultural products proposed for the tariff reduction plan. It, how-

ever, agreed to the proposed list later.

The move called for a reduction of the country's exclusion list to 10 percent of the total tariff lines, from the original list submitted containing 577 tariff lines or 11 percent of the total.

Trade officials said the Chinese government wanted the Philippines to open 60 percent of the country's total product lines to China which, they said, posed no problem since existing trade with China already covered 61 percent of the tariff lines.

Officials said details of the RP-China deal would be finalized soon and that it would be implemented starting Jan. 1 next year.

As part of the agreement, the Philippines agreed to recognize China as a market economy.

How to raise SSS contributions

CORAZON de la Paz, SSS president and CEO, spearheads a media blitz to push for an increase in members' contributions. She is not doing a good job of it.

Her selling point is that benefits have outstripped contributions. This is because benefits were raised several times without any corresponding increases in contributions. As a result, she says, the total pension a retiree gets is much more than what he paid in. Besides, she says, too many retirees are living too long. She probably prefers that retirees die sooner and faster.

Clearly, De la Paz does not understand the underlying mathematics of social security. As an accountant, she looks at pensions and contributions as debt and credit. She should ask an actuary to explain to her the inner workings of compound interest and the mortality table.

De la Paz equates contributions to benefits. Her equation is incomplete. The complete equation is: contributions plus investment income equal benefits plus operating expenses.

The quality of the investment income should be looked into. How much of this amount is interest receivable on loans to bankrupt Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. and other borrowers, private and public? How much is the interest receivable from individual members that the

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

SSS can no longer trace?

Investment income is actually larger than what is shown in the 2003 annual report. This is because investment income is shown as net of investment expense. Investment expense should be on the right side of the equation as part of operating expenses. But, if de la Paz adds investment expenses to operating expenses, she runs afoul of another rule that limits operating expenses to 3 percent of investment income. This is the now-you-see-now-you-don't style of accounting.

And yet, even though investment expenses are on the left side of the equation as a deduction from investment income, operating expenses still exceed the legal limit of 12 percent of contributions plus 3 percent of investment income. Therefore, an increase in contributions will cover up this illegal excess since 12 percent of the increase will be available as operating expenses. An illegal act will be legalized.

The quality of the investment portfolio should be looked into. There are a lot of deadwood investments. The P40-billion mass housing portfolio is hopelessly in arrears. So is the P30 billion in small salary, tuition and calamity loans.

Total assets declined in 2001 and 2002. By changing the accounting system, this decline was reversed. Thus, in 2003, total assets went up. Being the sharp accountant that she is, De la Paz solves financial problems by juggling the books. And she finds the legal basis for it.

De la Paz manages two funds, the SSS fund and the employees compensation (ECC) fund. Before, the annual report presented separate results for each fund. But the SSS fund has been losing money. On the other hand, the ECC makes enough to cover the SSS loss. So, de la Paz, in the 2003 report, consolidated the results of the two funds. The SSS loss vanished. Another case of now-you-see-it-now-you-don't style of accounting.

The SSS has been outrageously profligate in its operating expenses. At the time when assets were dwindling, operating expenses were hitting the ceiling. For example, ever since the SSS was liberated from the government salary standardization program under the 1997 law, salaries, allowance and fringe benefits have soared to an annual average of around P750,000 per employee.

About one-third of the employee force are on a contractual basis. The labor contractor holds office right on the top floor of the SSS main office in Quezon City. The sweetheart contract was never put out for public bidding. Retired SSS executives, in their golden parachutes, run the company.

Nonetheless, De la Paz is right. Benefits have outstripped contributions. In the 2003 annual report benefits were P42.8 billion while contributions were only P39.4 billion. Investment income of P13.7 billion covered the P3.4 billion shortfall.

But the financial bind the SSS finds itself in is not only because benefits have outstripped contributions. Criminal and profligate mismanagement play significantly in the sorry financial state of the SSS. So the question boils down to this: Should the members be made to pay for the years of mismanagement?

The official stand of the Philippine Association of Retired Persons (PARP) on the proposed increase in contributions is this: contributions can only be raised subject to the following conditions (a) in accordance with law, benefits must be correspondingly raised, (b) any investible portion of the increase should be invested in government securities only, (c) none of the new contributions shall be used for operating expenses. Above all, the new contributions should never be used to make up for any losses; such losses, by law, are the liabilities of the national government, especially since the culprits have not been prosecuted.

PARP also strongly recommends that President Arroyo should constitute as soon as possible a fact-finding committee to determine exactly what is happening at the SSS and to recommend solutions. This committee should be composed entirely of professionals in management, investment, insurance, and actuarial science, all from the private sector. No politicians or political appointees need apply, please.

RP seeks deal

From page B1

a US social security number.

"We need to encourage OFWs to make it a habit to remit through the banking system so that they can help boost our GIR (gross international reserves)," Amatong said. Beefing up the country's dollar reserves was necessary to improve the foreign exchange rate, she added.

She said the Philippines was hoping to get a bilateral agreement with the United States similar to what the latter has forged with Mexico. Amatong said Mexicans remitting through US banks were granted several privileges, like being exempted from the requirement of having a social security number. They only have to present a community tax certificate to be able to remit through the US banks.

Amatong said the Philippines would soon try to establish similar agreements with other countries where many Filipinos are working. The finance chief added that the Philippines was targeting to forge a bilateral agreement with Japan after discussions with the United States have been concluded.

Aside from the United States, other major sources of OFW remittances are Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong and Japan.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas expects OFW remittances for this year to grow by 6 percent to \$8.2 billion.

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MONDAY,
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BUSINESS

B3

Power rate hike viewed positively, say analysts

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission's recent decision granting National Power Corp. a provisional authority (PA) to adjust its rates by an average of 98 centavos has a strong positive effect on the stock market, analysts said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) Index (PHISIX) last Thursday surged to 1,739.92, its highest close in almost 40 months when it finished at 1,744.57 sometime in April 2000.

"It is no accident that the recent strength of the Philippine stock market follows closely in the heels of the decision of the ERC to allow Napocor to raise its rates," said Jon Pratt, head of Debt Capital Markets for Asia Pacific of Credit Suisse First Boston.

Pratt also said the ERC decision had a strong positive impact on the recent \$1-billion bond issue by the Philippine government.

Switzerland-based UBS Investment Research, for its part, confirmed that the market had reacted favorably to the Napocor rate adjustment, noting that the ERC decision was "a step in the right direction."

UBS analysts said PHISIX has risen 6.1 per cent since the rate hike.

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CH JOB

Call for tax changes & projects review

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DOF upset over House rejection of taxpayers' SALs

By Michelle V. Remo

DEPARTMENT of Finance officials

are upset over the decision of the House of Representatives to remove in the tax amnesty bill the

provision requiring all taxpayers to annually declare their assets. DOF officials said the purpose

of the tax amnesty would be defeated if taxpayers would not be required to submit their state-

ments of assets and liabilities (SALs) every year.

The end-goal of the tax amnesty is to create a database of all taxpayers to monitor the accuracy of their tax payments and, with the help of the data, solve the government's problem on huge tax leakages over time, the DOF said.

"The intention of the tax amnesty is really to help plug tax leakages through a taxpayers' database," Finance Secretary Juanita Amato told reporters. "Without it, what will be the amnesty for?"

Under the DOF's version of the tax amnesty, delinquent taxpayers who have liabilities from 2003 and the years before will only be required to pay an amount equivalent to 3 percent of their net worth as of December 2003 to settle their tax obligation. They will also be immune from penalties and charges.

In exchange, all taxpayers will be required to submit to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) their SALs every year. With the taxpayer's annual SAL, the BIR can determine the accuracy of his or her tax remittances. Through better monitoring, the government hopes to plug tax leakages, which is estimated at about P200 billion every year—enough to wipe out the government's budget deficit which last year stood

at P199.9 billion.

There were several other versions of the bill filed with the House of Representatives, but the ways and means committee decided to remove the provision requiring the annual submission of SAL when it came out with a consolidated version last week.

Amato said the DOF would continue to push for the adoption of the SAL proposal during the coming hearings. Congressional hearings on the tax amnesty is expected to be finalized this week.

According to government sources, some legislators believe that requiring taxpayers to annually submit their SALs may be unconstitutional. The congressmen said the SAL proposal should be embodied in a separate bill and not combined with the tax amnesty because the appropriateness of making one's assets and liabilities a matter of public record should first be debated.

The committee on ways and means said legislators would just file a separate bill on the annual submission of SALs.

The BIR on the other hand said it would be all right to have a separate bill on the regular submission of SAL, as long as Congress would make sure that the said bill would also be passed at around the same time as the tax amnesty.

MAYBANK GROUP ANNOUNCES RECORD PRE-TAX PROFIT

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Malayan Banking Berhad [Maybank] posted a record pre-tax profit of RM3.358B [PHP48.691B] for the financial year ended June 30, 2004—up 28.2% over the RM2.619B [PHP37.976B] in the previous year on the back of higher income and lower loan loss provisions. Net profit for Malaysia's largest banking group increased by 21.4% to RM2.424B [PHP35.148B], from RM1.996B [PHP28.942B] in the same period last year. Earnings per share was higher at RM0.673 [PHP9.76] compared with RM0.559 [PHP8.11] in June 2003.

Maybank Group President and Chief Executive Officer Datuk Amirsham A. Aziz said the good results were due to higher fee-based income, growth in net interest income, better asset quality and the improved performance of the group's operations in other ASEAN countries, including Maybank Philippines.

Loans growth expanded 5.1%

during the year due to a strong 15% growth in both consumer loans and small-and medium-scale enterprise (SME) financing. Amirsham said he expected loans growth to expand between 6% and 8% in the next 12 months.

The Group's performance for the year translated into a gross return on equity [ROE] of 23.9%, compared with 21.8% previously. Moreover, improvements in asset quality saw loan loss provisions charged for the year decline by a substantial 45.6% this year, against the previous financial year.

Maybank's overseas operations [including Maybank Philippines] registered a record growth of 63.4%, with overall pre-tax profit climbing to RM217.5M [PHP3.153.75M], from RM133.1M [PHP1.929.95M] previously.

Maybank began its Philippine operations in 1997 and currently has

45 branches in key areas nationwide. Leading the Malaysian banking industry for the past several decades, Maybank is currently one of the top banks in Asia and worldwide.

The Malaysian business newspaper *StarBiz*, in its September 2, 2004 issue, ran an article on Maybank, citing investment research house JP Morgan, which maintained an overweight rating on Maybank, as having raised its 12-month price target for the bank to RM13.50 [PHP195.75] from RM12.68 [PHP182.99]. JP Morgan also raised Maybank's projected earnings for fiscal years 2005 and 2006 by 7% and 9%, respectively. On another note in the same article, AmResearch noted the increase in Maybank's interest income for the past three years and likewise forecasted its loans growth of about 5% for fiscal year 2005.



Maybank

Bingo Bonanza income hit P33.7M in first half

LEISURE & Resorts World Corp. (LRWC) and its wholly owned subsidiary, AB Leisure Exponent Inc. (ABLE), doing business as Bingo Bonanza Corp. (Bingo Bonanza), posted P33.7 million in net income from January to June 2004.

Officials of Bingo Bonanza, which suffered a net loss of P3.3 million during the first half of 2003, said the company attributed this recovery to a new product, an electronic variant of the bingo game, which was introduced in 2002.

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PROGRAMME

October 28, 2004	3:00-4:15	Session 4
8:00-9:00 Registration 9:00-9:15 Opening Remarks Mr. Jose Ortega President, Philippine Marketing Association	4:15-4:30	Synthesis/Open Forum Mr. Tom C. Banquib Jr. President, AB Communications Inc.
AM Sessions 9:15-10:15		
Module 1: Principles of Market Convergence Session 1 Introduction to Market Convergence (Principles and Components of Market Convergence) Ms. Karen V. De Asia Faculty and Marketing Observer DLSU Graduate School of Business	10:15-10:30	Synthesis/Open Forum Ms. Luz T. Suplico Assistant Professor, De La Salle University
10:15-10:30		
Session 2 Market Convergence: Market Technology-Driven? (Roots or Origins of Convergent Markets) Mr. Ferdinand De La Cruz Head, Wireless Business Group, GLOBE Telecom	11:30-11:45	Synthesis/Open Forum Ms. Mylene Abue-Guzan Chief Executive Officer Falka Multi-Media Inc.
11:30-12:00		
Synthesis/Open Forum Dr. Leonardo R. Garcia, Jr. Dean, Professional Continuing Education DLSU College of St. Benilde	11:45-12:00	Closing/Raffle
12:00-1:00 PM LUNCH, BREAK		
PM Sessions 1:15-2:30		
Module 2: Managing in a Convergent Market Session 3 Strategic Options in a Convergent Market (Competing in a Convergent Market and the Financial Benefits of Succeeding in this Market) Sec. Luis P. Laranza, Jr. President/Adviser for Jala Generation and Chairman of Land Bank and Quezonair		

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A slippery Union

UNION Cement Corp. was a punters' favorite last week, on the speculation that the largest cement company would receive cash windfall, just like affiliate Trans Asia, from the Holcim takeover.

More important, another speculation was that the Swiss cement giant would, under the tender-offer rule, be required to offer the UCC minority shareholders the same price that it paid the Phinma/Bacnotan Group to acquire undisputed majority control of the country's largest cement company.

Any, but some, reaction to the windfall is apparently forthcoming.

According to Phinma CEO Ramon del Rosario Jr., the Holcim buyout of the Phinma/Bacnotan Group stake in Union Cement had received approval from the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The Swiss multinational simply skirted the tender-offer rule by acquiring the holding company that controls UCC, not the UCC shares. With the buyout, Holcim now effectively controls about 77.5 percent of UCC.

Del Rosario, a former finance secretary, would not disclose the effective per share price paid by the Swiss; the market buzz put it at P4/share, while another account put it at P5/share.

That apparently is why the erstwhile sleeper stock, amid uncharacteristic brisk and see-sawing trading, closed last week at P2.46, after briefly touching P2.95, from P1.92 the previous Friday.

Buendia property play

IT LOOKS like Buendia, instead of The Fort, promises a better property play for the Ayalas and the assorted owners of decrepit low-rise buildings lining up the avenue.

According to Ayala Land, the whole block bounded by Buendia, Ayala, Jupiter/Metropolitan, and Edsa had been reclassified by the Makati City Hall as early as 2000 and had been included in the so-called Central Business District.

And that is why the Ayalas are now building the Columns high-rise condominiums and a low-rise call center on what had for decades been empty lots at the Buendia-Ayala intersection.

With the reclassification, the Ayala-imposed height restrictions had effectively been relaxed and, as Ayala Land now submits, "high-density office and residential developments" may now be built within the enlarged zone.

As to the claim that a group of Buendia property owners bought their lands near the intersection in the '60s on the belief that they had park frontage, "Ayala has never made any representation in the deeds of sale... that the intersection were parks or were to remain as parks," said an Ayala Land statement.

According to the grapevine, the Buendia property owners had already contacted Marcos presidential legal counsel Manuel Lazaro for a contemplated class suit against the Ayalas.

Among the big name property owners along the Buendia strip include the Yuchengcos, the Zuelligs, the Concepcions and the Sys, the latter owning the used-car lots through seriously born-again Henry "Big Boy" Sy Jr.

Puerto Azul turnabout

THE SUPREME Court denied the registration of only 6,917 square meters of Puerto Azul, nor 110 hectares as had been reported in this column on Sept. 3.

"The 6,917 sqm property is not absolutely lost if the proper documentation can be produced and the errors rectified," Puerto Azul said in a statement.

The fate of the 110 hectares mentioned in the Supreme Court decision is still, with the Ayala and Zuelligs, who own Puerto Azul, declined to elaborate on their status.

In any case, the contested properties are about a kilometer away from the newly launched Cresta Grande subdivision within the sprawling mountainous beach resort.

The Panillos, who own Puerto Azul, have apparently been encouraged by the spectacular success of Punta Fuego, the joint-venture project of the Roxases and the Metro Pacific Group, further down the Batangas coastline.

Like the Terrazas de Punta Fuego, Cresta Grande is offering lot packages targeting Metro Manila's rich who would like a weekend seaside getaway.

Cresta Grande lot cuts are bigger, at 525 to 1,200 sqm, than Punta Fuego's 350 to 1,000 sqm, but priced lower, at P5,000 to P8,000 a sqm, as against Punta Fuego's P8,500 to P10,000.

Cresta Grande is also nearer to Manila, about 60 kilometers away from Rizal Park, as against Punta Fuego's 110 kilometers.

BSP tightens . . .

From page B1

credit cards, as well as a mechanism for handling customer complaints.

The banking regulator is likewise drawing up rules to ensure that banks would conduct a tighter assessment of credit card users' capability to pay. However, the BSP has ruled out the prescription of a ceiling on credit card exposure as a percentage of a bank's portfolio.

Credit card penetration rate in the Philippines is estimated at 30 percent of the population.

There are about four million credit cards issued in the Philippines.

Credit cards represent lending without collateral and whose past-due ratios have been rising. With the cutthroat competition among institutions issuing credit credits, there is a tendency to be more aggressive in expanding the customer base without checking on the prospective customer's capacity to pay.

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

Heard through the grapevine

CONSTRUCTION magnate Reghis Romero had been slated for an ambassadorial posting in an Asian country. But with the

Miriam Defensor-Santiago blitz, the diplomatic prospects have just suddenly dimmed.

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PDIC: Many banks eager to acquire FSB

By Doris C. Dumlaog

SHUTTERED First Savings Bank now has reason to hope after several banks have expressed interest in becoming its white knight, said its overseer Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) president Ricardo Tan.

"The chances of rehabilitation are there," said PDIC president Ricardo Tan. Tan said the PDIC had received "informal" interests to acquire FSB, but the receiver would start inviting investors only once it had finished its due diligence audit on the thrift bank's books.

"We're still doing the pencil-pushing... the investors will want to know what they are buying into," Tan said, noting that the PDIC would have to determine first whether the bank could be rehabilitated. "Under the law, we have to make that determination within 90 days."

Tan said the PDIC hoped to finish its task within the next two weeks.

In a separate interview, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said there were at least two banks that had offered

to take over FSB prior to its shutdown last Wednesday.

The BSP would not have placed FSB under receivership, Reyes said, if either of the two banks had been willing to immediately take over and service the withdrawal demands.

"They wanted it to stay on a bank holiday until Friday, but we couldn't wait that long," Reyes said. "They have to talk to the PDIC now."

The BSP executive said FSB attracted the interest of those banks despite its very small loan portfolio because its branches were well-located.

Established in 1965, the FSB head office is located on E. Rodriguez, Quezon City. It has three branches in Cubao, Quezon City, C.M. Recto Ave., Manila and Tanay, Rizal.

The BSP has imposed a moratorium on the issuance of new branch licenses to encourage consolidation within the banking system.

Reyes estimated the FSB's total loan portfolio at only P99 million, of which over 50 percent was non-performing.

He said the BSP had given the thrift bank until Aug. 31 to address its capital deficiency. "We were overtaken by events," he said.

The BSP said the bank run which led to

FSB's bank holiday came about when its clearing bank terminated FSB's account. About 96 checks issued by FSB to retail clients, mostly market vendors, bounced that same day and triggered panic among depositors.

The BSP now plans to tap commercial banks to institute a red alert mechanism to ward off bank runs which can cause the collapse of small banks.

The FSB has 10,609 account holders with total deposits of about P193.93 million, almost all of which fall under the new minimum deposit insurance coverage of P250,000.

The New Central Bank Act allows the BSP to place any bank in receivership and liquidation if any of the following conditions are present:

- The bank is unable to pay its liabilities as they become due in the ordinary course of business, provided that this shall not include inability to pay caused by extraordinary demands induced by financial panic in the banking community;
- The bank has insufficient realizable assets, as determined by the Bangko Sentral to meet its liabilities; and
- The bank cannot continue in business without involving probable losses to its depositors or creditors.

Quality of our growth

SO OUR economy grew by 6.2 percent in the second quarter of this year. While that still pales in comparison to what our immediate neighbors have achieved, this growth performance would appear to belie that ours is an economy in crisis. Is all the hype about fiscal crisis overblown, then? Will the Filipinos' much vaunted resilience again save the day, and make the specter of economic collapse little more than doomsayers' exaggerated ranting?

Growth and jobs

If the economy grew so well, why did the unemployment rate rise from 12.2 percent a year ago to 13.7 percent today? The 1.1 million new jobs reportedly generated over the past year was still far insufficient to catch up with new entrants to the labor force, who numbered about 1.9 million in the past year alone. Note that at this rate, the 6-10 million jobs targeted over the next six years will not make a dent on the unemployment rate! To make real progress, the government should actually be targeting 2 million jobs a year, or 12 million over the next six years. Impossible dream?

To understand this "jobless growth" phenomenon better, one has to look beyond the aggregate numbers and examine where exactly the growth is coming from. The data imply that growth in the economy is coming from sectors that do not offer all that many jobs. Case in point was our growth performance last year, which was significantly boosted by the opening of the Malampaya gas wells in Palawan. This had propelled the overall mining sector (of which petroleum is a key part) to 26.7 percent growth. In turn, this led the overall industry sector to a 3.6 percent growth rate, masking the fact that construction, the second highest job creator in industry (i.e. next to manufacturing), had actually contracted by a hefty 8.5 percent last year.

Sources of growth

This year, growth in the second quarter mostly came, as usual, from the services sector, which contributed 3.2 percentage points out of the overall GNP growth of 5.7 percent. Communication continues to dominate this growth, posting 16.0 percent growth in the quarter, thanks to our continuing love affair with the cellphone and text messaging. Unfortunately, this sector is not a particularly strong job creator, accounting for less than five percent of total jobs in the economy.

Industry contributed the next largest share to GNP growth with 1.7 percentage points out of the 5.7 percent GNP growth. In dramatic contrast to last year, construction was the fastest growing subsector of industry in the past quarter, posting a rather unusual 13.7 percent growth over the previous year. What is remarkable about this growth is that the sector has consistently been contracting in recent years and actually contracted by 2.6 percent in 2003, but was suddenly boosted by a surge in public construction activities in the first and second quarters. The timing, of course, makes it no surprise.

No FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito



With construction accounting for close to six percent of total jobs in the economy, all this election-related construction activity must have contributed significantly to job creation. That's the good news. The bad news is, that same surge in spending was instrumental in our having breached the fiscal deficit target. The other bad news is that the growth rate in construction is likely to return to negative territory now that the campaign season is over, and especially now that the persistent budget deficit has forced the government into severe belt tightening. Thus, we can count on any further job increases from that sector in the foreseeable future.

Agriculture, normally a big job provider accounting for 35 percent of total jobs in the economy, this time contributed a mere 0.7 percentage point to the aggregate GNP growth rate. Indeed, the sector saw a net decline of 76 thousand jobs over the past year, even though it has so far grown faster than last year. There is a bit of a puzzle here as most of the specific major crop sectors (except for coconut) posted positive growth, and even in the double digits for rice and corn. And yet the number of farm jobs actually declined. I don't have the answer for this one.

Consumption-driven

The demand for goods and services that spurs growth in our production continues to come primarily from personal consumption expenditures, which account for two-thirds of all spending for our products. With consumption growth further accelerating to 6.0 percent from last year's 5.3 percent, the ever-increasing flow of overseas remittances has clearly been instrumental to this.

Ideally, we would like to see more of demand growth coming from investment expenditures, as these directly lead to a further increase in productive capacity of the economy. The good news is that investment (capital formation) actually grew by a healthy 8.5 percent in the last quarter, propped up by the artificial surge in construction described above. The bad news, as before, is that this is not likely to be sustained given the need to severely cut down on government capital expenditures.

Finally, the other major flaw in our production performance is in the way more than half of our total production (55 percent of total) is confined to Metro Manila and its surrounding provinces. With 70 percent of the Filipino poor living in the countryside, we cannot make much dent on poverty in the country for as long as our economic growth is as narrow, shallow and hollow as it has been. This is the other face of the crisis we need to address.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

CAP to get P13B in loan, property

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

COLLEGE Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) said its board on Friday approved a proposed P6 billion property infusion from a local real estate firm, and a P7.1-billion loan from a foreign fund to help the pre-ned firm plug its trust fund deficit.

Sources told the INQUIRER that in exchange for the P6 billion worth of property, CAP would issue preferred shares to real estate firm. The investor would also be entitled to a board seat in CAP.

The capital, once approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), will be placed in CAP's trust fund.

CAP's board also approved the initial terms of a memorandum of understanding for a \$127-million loan, or roughly P7.1 billion, from a New York-based fund. The loan will be paid back in full in 10 years, and will have a grace period of two years on interest payments.

The same New York fund may also provide

in new equity into CAP and may be entitled to two seats in the company's board. CAP, however, still has to negotiate this arrangement with the New York fund.

CAP has yet to decide whether it will issue common or preferred shares in exchange for equity from the New York fund. The New York fund has yet to seek approval from its own mother firm for the loan and equity infusion.

The board also authorized CAP's business development group headed by CAP director Robert John Sobrepeña to negotiate for the final terms of the \$127-million loan and \$100-million equity infusion.

Sobrepeña earlier said CAP is expected to ink an agreement with these two investors before the end of the month.

Company sources earlier said that when the P7.1 loan is secured, CAP will use the cash to buy back the assets in its trust fund which consist of participation in approximately P3.4 billion worth of bonds backed up by the cash flow from the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) project and certain real estate properties.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 10, 2004)					
STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bank of the Philippine Islands	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	155,900
Bank of the Philippine Islands	46	46.5	45.5	46.5	1,137,600
Bank of the Philippine Islands	535	535	535	535	350
Bank of the Philippine Islands	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	400
Bank of the Philippine Islands	42	42	41.5	42	15,700
Bank of the Philippine Islands	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	410,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	27.5	28.5	27.5	28	870,600
Bank of the Philippine Islands	23.25	23.25	23	23.25	16,700
Bank of the Philippine Islands	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	32,400
Bank of the Philippine Islands	23.25	23.25	23	23.25	177,100
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bank of the Philippine Islands	1.02	1.02	1	1	88,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	3	3	3	3	3,000
Bank of the Philippine Islands	23.30	23.30	23.30	23.30	8,300
Bank of the Philippine Islands	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	20
Bank of the Philippine Islands	15.45	15.50	15.45	15.50	13,800
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	2,400
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.69	1,750,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	10.10	10.45	10.00	10.35	216,650
Intercom Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	59,000
ISAT Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.036	0.037	7,200,000
Liberty Telecom Holdings	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.225	100,000
Philcom Corp.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	5,550,000
Philcom Corp.	14.00	14.25	14.00	14.20	25,870
Philcom Corp.	0.66	0.67	0.66	0.67	2,460,000
Philcom Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	7,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	16	121,000
Manila Electric Co. B	24.5	24.75	24.5	24.75	1,563,200
Petrone Corp.	2.6	2.85	2.6	2.85	1.3, 8,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.14	215,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.44	1.5	1.44	1.46	1,083,000
APL Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	99,300
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.59	0.6	0.59	0.6	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
Reunión Cement Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	30,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.46	5,993,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.96	15,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	12,000
Justine Foods Corp.	26	26	25.5	26.5	105,800
PLDT Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	180,100
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	16,900
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70	69.5	69.5	45,100
Univision Corp.	8.2	8.6	8.2	8.6	153,000
Univision Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,150,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	57,000,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	5	5	5	5	1,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.4	27,207,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	300,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.028	0.033	0.026	0.033	86,300,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.46	1.46	67,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	100,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.007	124,000,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.15	0.17	0.15	0.17	310,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	20,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	8,200
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.6	10,380,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	770,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	3,480,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.17	0.165	0.165	0.175	17,730,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	2.1	2.6	2.1	2.16	4,990,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.035	7,000,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	50,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	27.5	28	27	28	1,895,800
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	160,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.075	0.0825	0.075	0.0825	31,400,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.84	1.85	1.84	1.84	525,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.82	1.79	1.8	1.79	222,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.32	1.42	1.32	1.4	445,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	200,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	553,100
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,700
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.55	0.58	0.54	0.58	87,550,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.15	0.155	6,720,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	100,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	500,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	200,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	60,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	15,371,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	5,500,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	7,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.97	1.02	1,897,700
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	1,300,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.73	0.74	0.72	0.73	3,180,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	15,200
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	440,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	22	22	21.75	21.75	139,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,650
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
OTHERS					
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.3	20,000
PROPERTY					
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	8.1	8.3	8	8.3	20,531,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.54	1,340,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.4	49,430,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	150,700
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.36	21,850,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	134,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	15,720,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	50,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.23	0.245	0.22	0.245	11,270,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	12,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	410,000
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	2	2	2	2	69,300
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	1	1	1	1.06	15,300
Alab-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	

Bingo Bonanza income hit . . . From page B4

than offset the losses in 2003, marking the start of its upturn during the first half of 2004.

Bingo Bonanza recorded a 12.5-percent increase in sales to P1.2 billion during the first half, up from P140.9 million over the same period last year.

As a result, parent company LRWC posted a consolidated income of P19.5 million, a substantial improvement from the P22.3 million net loss for the same period in 2003.

In 1999, LRWC acquired capital stocks of ABLE/Bingo Bonanza through Shared Exchange Agreements.



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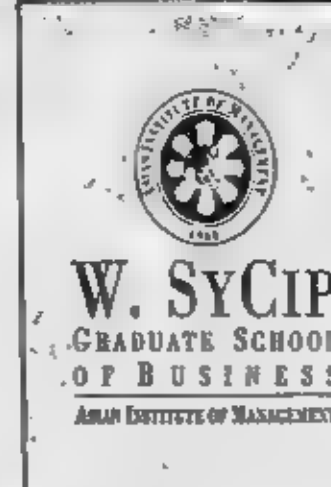


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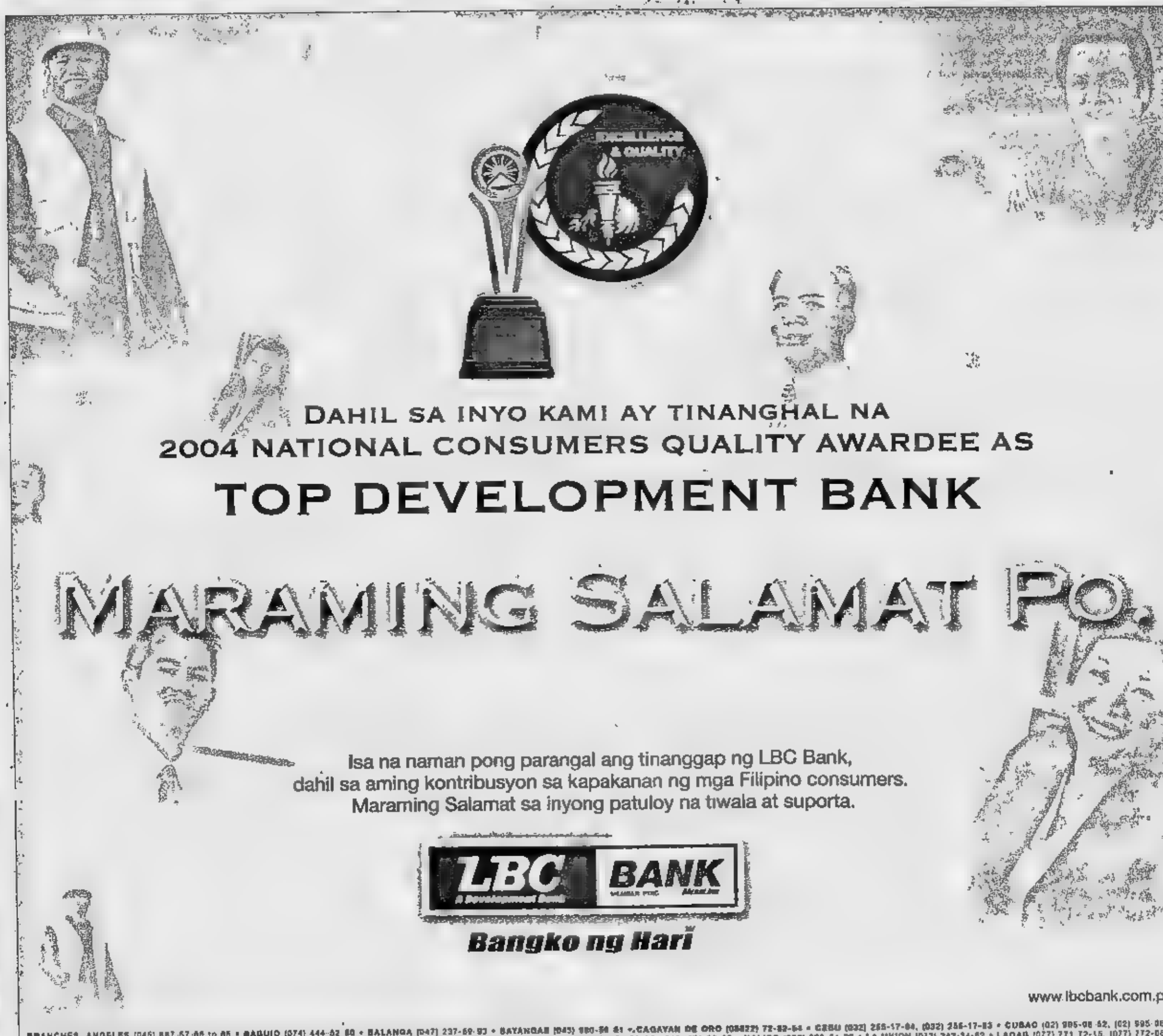
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PAL wants out of rehabilitation program

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Airlines has asked creditors to let it get out of its rehabilitation program this year, or 5 years ahead of schedule, so it could borrow funds for expansion, according to PAL president Jaime Bautista.

Bautista said the airline needed the written approval of all its creditors before it could get out of the 10-year rehab program that started in 1999.

Most of PAL's creditors, he said,

were open to the idea. Some, however, have expressed reservations about the plan.

"The terms of the rehabilitation program are limiting our growth," Bautista noted.

PAL, Asia's oldest airline, was forced to undergo a rehabilitation program due to the adverse impact of a major labor problem and its failure to settle some \$2.2 billion in debt. The rehab called for the infusion of \$200 million in fresh equity from owner Lucio Tan.

Like any company under reha-

bilitation, the flag carrier is barred from incurring new loans. Major moves, including the purchase of new aircraft and flying to new routes, need to be approved by the creditors.

The US Export Import Bank and a group of European export credit agencies accounted for nearly two-thirds of PAL's \$2.2 billion in debt. About \$400 million is owed to local banks.

PAL has so far managed to reduce its obligations to about \$1.2 billion. Bautista said the airline had

been paying debts as they fall due.

"Financially, we are okay because we have enough cash flow to pay our obligations."

During the last fiscal year ending March 2004, PAL posted a net loss of P654 million, down from a net income of P363 million in the previous year.

In peso terms, PAL's liabilities covered under the rehabilitation stood at P77 billion as of end-March 2004, down from P83 billion the previous fiscal year.

PAL settled P10.4 billion in

debt in the last fiscal year but foreign exchange adjustments ate up P3.8 billion.

Before rehabilitation, PAL had a fleet of 65 aircraft and a workforce of about 13,000.

Bautista said PAL's fleet had been reduced to 30 and its workforce to a little over 7,000 in the course of the rehabilitation.

Bautista said that while PAL was showing positive results so far in the current fiscal year, external forces continued to cloud its prospects.

PAL, like any other airlines in the world, is reeling from the impact of the rising cost of fuel and terrorism threats. The weakening of the peso is further aggravating its problems.

"Airlines in the region, including PAL, are performing better. But we are hostage to external forces like fuel prices, foreign exchange and threats of terrorism that affect profitability," he pointed out.

The 47-year-old Bautista was named president of PAL last Aug. 26. He replaced Avelino Zapanta who had retired.

New BSP unit to head centralized credit bureau

By Doris C. Dumlas

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved the establishment of a new unit that would spearhead a centralized credit bureau system in the country.

At present, the Philippines is at the bottom 10 of the 145 countries ranked according to the scope and efficiency of their local private credit bureaus, according to a global report of the World Bank.

Although the BSP preferred to have the Bankers' Association of the Philippines to take charge of the credit bureau, it had decided to step into the picture to speed up reforms in the country's credit reporting system.

The new BSP unit will jumpstart efforts to reform the Philippine credit rating process until a law on fair credit reporting is enacted, BSP officer in charge Alberto Reyes told reporters.

"We hope that all the clearances will be in place soon so that the unit can start its operations by the first semester of next year," Reyes said.

The interim credit bureau will assign identification numbers to Philippine borrowers. It

is expected to pave the way for its transition to a private sector-led system.

Under the interim framework, all banks operating in the country will provide data on both "positive" and "negative" list of borrowers to the BSP for processing.

To date, the BSP has a data-sharing facility which, however, includes only information on delinquent borrowers. In general, banks are still hesitant to share information on good borrowers as they fear this will reduce their competitive edge.

The BSP believed that many banks could have avoided risky loan exposures in the past if they were more aware of their borrowers' outstanding liabilities with other banks.

Reyes said the BSP's legal counsel ruled that the institution could push through with this interim framework provided that banks would seek a waiver of confidentiality from the borrowers as soon as a loan application was submitted.

The interim framework will not require any amendment to the bank secrecy law since it is not expected to infringe on secrecy of deposit accounts. But to protect the BSP's right to generate feedback and consolidate the credit data, the secrecy waiver was needed.

Proposed LTO requirement seen to yield P15B in revenue

THE LAND Transportation Office (LTO) could help the government raise an additional P15 billion in revenue by the end of the year if it would implement a proposal by Congress to require car owners to present their Income Tax Return as a condition to the registration of their vehicles.

Under House Resolution No. 154, House Speaker Jose de Venecia and nine other senior members of Congress urged President Arroyo to issue an executive order mandating the LTO to require the submission of ITR of individuals prior to the registration of their vehicles.

It was noted that privately owned cars and trucks registered with the LTO reached 3.14 million last year, much higher than the 67,800 individuals who paid their income taxes during the period.

Rep. Herminio Teves, senior vice chair of

the House Committee on Ways and Means, said the proposed measure would force tax evaders to pay taxes because otherwise, they would not be able to register their vehicles.

"The rationale of said resolution is to provide a mechanism of cross-checking the income declared and paid to the Bureau of Internal Revenue," Teves said in a recent privilege speech.

It was added in the resolution that there was a need to generate much-needed revenue by ensuring that taxes are captured by the tax net through an effective system that ensures revenue collection efficiency.

Teves noted in his speech that he agreed with President Macapagal-Arroyo that the budget deficit was the country's most urgent problem. "In war, we are asked to shed blood. In a fiscal crisis, we are only asked to pay the right amount of taxes," he stressed.

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Minimum Bid Price: P 219,38 sqm Minimum Bid Price: P 275,880 Lot 3 - Resd'l Lot , LA 2,482 sqm L2-D Orchard Homes Pulong Upa 1 Minimum Bid Price: P 3,074,900 Lot 4 - Junit 2005 , FA 226 92 sqm Minimum Bid Price: P 7,897,740 Lot 5 - Junit 2006 , FA 219 38 sqm Minimum Bid Price: P 7,668,810 Comm'l Condo , Tuscan Building, 114 Herrera St. Legaspi Village Minimum Bid Price: P 1,047,500 Lot 6 - WITHDRAWN Lot 7 - WITHDRAWN Lot 8 - WITHDRAWN Lot 9 - WITHDRAWN Lot 10 - WITHDRAWN Lot 11 - WITHDRAWN Lot 12 - WITHDRAWN Lot 13 - WITHDRAWN Lot 14 - WITHDRAWN Lot 15 - WITHDRAWN Lot 16 - WITHDRAWN Lot 17 - WITHDRAWN Lot 18 - WITHDRAWN Lot 19 - WITHDRAWN Lot 20 - WITHDRAWN Lot 21 - WITHDRAWN Lot 22 - WITHDRAWN Lot 23 - WITHDRAWN Lot 24 - WITHDRAWN Lot 25 - WITHDRAWN Lot 26 - WITHDRAWN Lot 27 - WITHDRAWN Lot 28 - WITHDRAWN Lot 29 - WITHDRAWN Lot 30 - WITHDRAWN Lot 31 - WITHDRAWN Lot 32 - WITHDRAWN Lot 33 - WITHDRAWN Lot 34 - WITHDRAWN Lot 35 - WITHDRAWN Lot 36 - WITHDRAWN Lot 37 - WITHDRAWN Lot 38 - WITHDRAWN Lot 39 - 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Petron considering freeze in gas prices

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY department said world oil prices have started to ease this month, prompting semi-government-owned Petron Corp. to consider a possible freeze in its pump prices.

According to Department of Energy data, prices of trend-setter Dubai crude as of Sept. 9 fell for the 12th time in the last 14 trading days after hitting an all-time high of \$41.26 a barrel last Aug. 20.

DOE monitoring showed that the average price of Dubai crude in the first nine days of September slid by \$3.32 to \$35.22 a barrel from \$38.54, in the wake of reports indicating an oversupply in the world market.

For prices of finished products, the benchmark Mean of Platts Singapore posted a \$3.50-cut for unleaded gasoline to an average of \$47.99 a barrel, from \$51.49 in August.

On the other hand, Mops-based diesel prices were still volatile in the 14 trading days up to Sept. 9, averaging \$51.86 a barrel from \$51.66 last month.

"If this new trend (of easing prices) sustains, we expect our pump prices to be steady in the coming days," Energy Secretary Vincent S. Perez said in a statement.

Petron public affairs manager Virginia A. Ruivivar said in a separate statement the local oil giant might be able to hold current prices if the

easing was sustained until the end of September. This, despite warnings from a price watchdog and other oil firms that another barrage of price hikes were expected this month.

The private sector-run Consumer and Oil Price Watch warned that importers were expected to hike gasoline prices by 47 centavos a liter and of diesel by P2.14 a liter.

COPW chair Raul Concepcion had also said local refiners Petron and Philipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. were expected to hike gasoline prices by 91 centavos a liter and to slash diesel prices by 63 centavos.

Officials of Shell and the Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association said further price hikes were indeed expected since the oil firms have not fully reflected increased costs in the world market to local pump prices.

Oil prices have been rising in the last few months due to high world oil demand amid tight supply, terrorist attacks, political tensions involving oil exporting countries and military unrest in the Middle East.

Petron's Ruivivar said analysts think the recent downward trend was mainly due to an apparent oversupply in market.

When prices were climbing to record high in August, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries increased production in a bid to stem the uptrend.

RP urged to consider nuclear power sources

By Abigail L. Ho

SYDNEY, Australia—Despite the Philippines' relatively small size, the government should not discount the possibility of tapping nuclear power in the coming years, a regional energy official said.

Ravinder Mago, general manager of the Nuclear Power Corp. of India, said the benefits of nuclear power, even for a small country like the Philippines, made it an obvious candidate for helping supply the country's future energy needs.

"Nuclear power is environmentally friendly, economically viable and has the advantage of energy security," he said. "It has huge potential of electricity generation for centuries to come."

He noted that Vietnam, also a small and developing country like the Philippines, was keen on tapping nuclear sources for its energy requirements.

The important things to consider, if a government would choose to use nuclear means in generating power, were the project proponent's technical expertise and the government's political will.

Should the Philippines decide to invest in nuclear power generation, he said the In-

dian government was willing to provide any form of assistance it could offer.

During the recently concluded 19th World Energy Council Congress and Exhibition here, much emphasis was given on nuclear power, especially by countries like China, Japan, Korea and India, where energy demand was projected to spike in the coming years.

China aimed to increase nuclear power's share in its energy mix to 4 percent by 2020 from the current 1.8 percent, said China State Development and Reform Commission vice chair Zhang Guo-bao.

To achieve this, China would be adding nuclear stations with capacities reaching 30 gigawatts.

Japan also planned to add more nuclear power capacity, said Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan chair Yohsaku Fuji, particularly as the country aimed to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent by 2010.

Korea likewise had plans to increase the 16,716 megawatts (MW) of electricity that 19 operating units were producing, according to Korea Electric Power Corp. senior vice president Meng-Hyun Yoon.

Seven more plants are currently under construction and are seen to boost the country's nuclear power capacity by 7,800 MW.

SEC warns of financial scams

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) has been receiving numerous complaints from irate victims against five companies, which could indicate the resurgence of illegal boiler room operations.

SEC Commissioner Josefa Poblador said the corporate watchdog was firming up its case against these firms and would divulge the names of these firms once cases are filed.

Boiler room operations usually involve unqualified sales people that use high pressure tactics, or misleading information, to sell stocks, commodities or land to potential investors, without a license.

"We are still checking whether the ones we've caught (before) are the same as the ones that resurfaced," Poblador said.

She said most of the complaints are from foreign investors.

"It is giving our country a bad name. We don't want to be tagged as the haven for boiler room activities. These firms check if the regulator is lowering its guard and then they start coming back," she said

Since 2000, the SEC has issued cease and desist orders against Goldberg & Partners, United Capital Management, Oxford International Management, Wells Chadwick, Barclays Group Inc. & New World Financial Group, Sherman Brothers Management, Bradford Kempner Management Services, Muller & Sons Securities, Dukes & Company Securities, Knowie & Sachs, Saxon & Swift, Newport Pacific Securities, Worldwide Investors, Asia World Online and Bradshaw Global Asset Management.

SEC officials also said one complaint recently filed with the SEC involved \$20,000. Poblador said the SEC was coordinating with its counterpart in Malaysia to gather evidence from victims in that country.

SEC officials said boiler room operators usually prey on developing countries, including Thailand, Philippines and Malaysia.

Poblador last month said the Commission has been alerted of renewed boiler room activities in Cebu, Pampanga, Davao and in Manila.

Former SEC Chair Lilia Baurista said some of these boiler room operators pretended to be call centers.



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FOR HEALTHY MEN: Discussion by a urologist on important health issues for men
- September 16, 2004
BONE UP ON OSTEOPOROSIS: Tips on avoiding bone loss in aging people
KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR VISION: The value of cataract screening for elders to detect eye problems
MANAGING DIABETES IN ELDERLY: Knowing the danger of diabetes in older people



CELEBRATING A PARTNERSHIP: Abolitz One and Diehl (Philippines) Inc. recently signed a five-year P1.5-billion distribution service agreement. DPI, one of the leading distributors of pharmaceuticals and consumer healthcare products in the country, will use Abolitz One's Distribute and Save (D&S) service that operates on the just-in-time concept which is necessary for goods being handled by DPI such as medicine, infant formula and even M&M chocolates. The partnership was sealed by (from left) DPI president Juergen Wolfgang Hirschberg, Abolitz One president and CEO Sabin Abolitz and DPI VP for Operations Larry Williams.

Surprise drop in US prices mixed news for economy

John Hughes, market analyst at Shields

Peter Cardillo at SW Bach said if oil prices hold in check, stocks could gather momentum. **APR**

In the past 12 months, the producer price index (PPI) is up 3.4 percent, down from a four percent pace in July. The core PPI is up 1.5 percent in the past 12 months.

"The awesome trade chasm narrowed a bit, but it is so wide that we cannot be too happy," said Joel Naroff at Naroff Economic Advisors.

"Uncertainty about oil prices along with slower economic growth will complicate the task of the Federal Reserve, which has embarked on a path of slowly but steadily rising interest rates," he said. **AF**

LOS ANGELES—Michael Eisner, who helped transform The Walt Disney Co. into a media powerhouse, but has come under increasing pressure recently to improve the company's lagging performance, will retire after more than two decades as CEO, the company said Friday.

Eisner has strongly endorsed Disney president Robert Iger as a potential successor. But the board could look to other executives of the company or even former Disney executives who now lead their own companies.

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- Intel® PRO/Wireless 2100 Network Connection
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Tablet PC Edition
- Intel® 855GM Chipset
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- 10.4" XGA TFT
- 80GB USB FDD
- V.92 Modem & 1000/100/10Mbps Gigabit Ethernet
- Approx. 1.85kg

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- Intel® PRO/Wireless 2200BG Network Connection
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® 855GM Chipset
- 256MB DDR333 (max. 2048MB)
- 80-160/40GB HDD
- 13.3" XGA TFT display
- Combo Drive (DVD & CD-RW)
- V.92 Modem & 1000/100/10Mbps Gigabit Ethernet
- Approx. 1.85kg (with weight saver option)

LifeBook S7010

- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
- Intel® Pentium® M Processor 1.70GHz
- Intel® PRO/Wireless 2200BG Network Connection
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- Intel® 855GM Chipset
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- 14" XGA TFT
- DVD Super Multi-Drive
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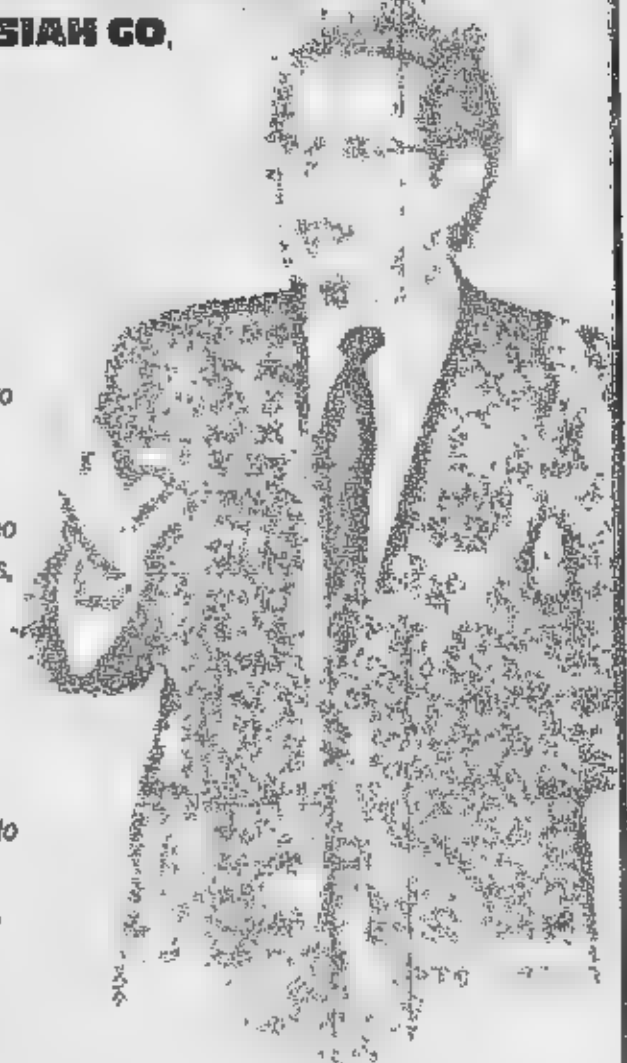
- How to develop category and premium price • How to secure leadership vs. strong competition • How to make the news w/o increasing A&P • Being the best, not necessarily the biggest
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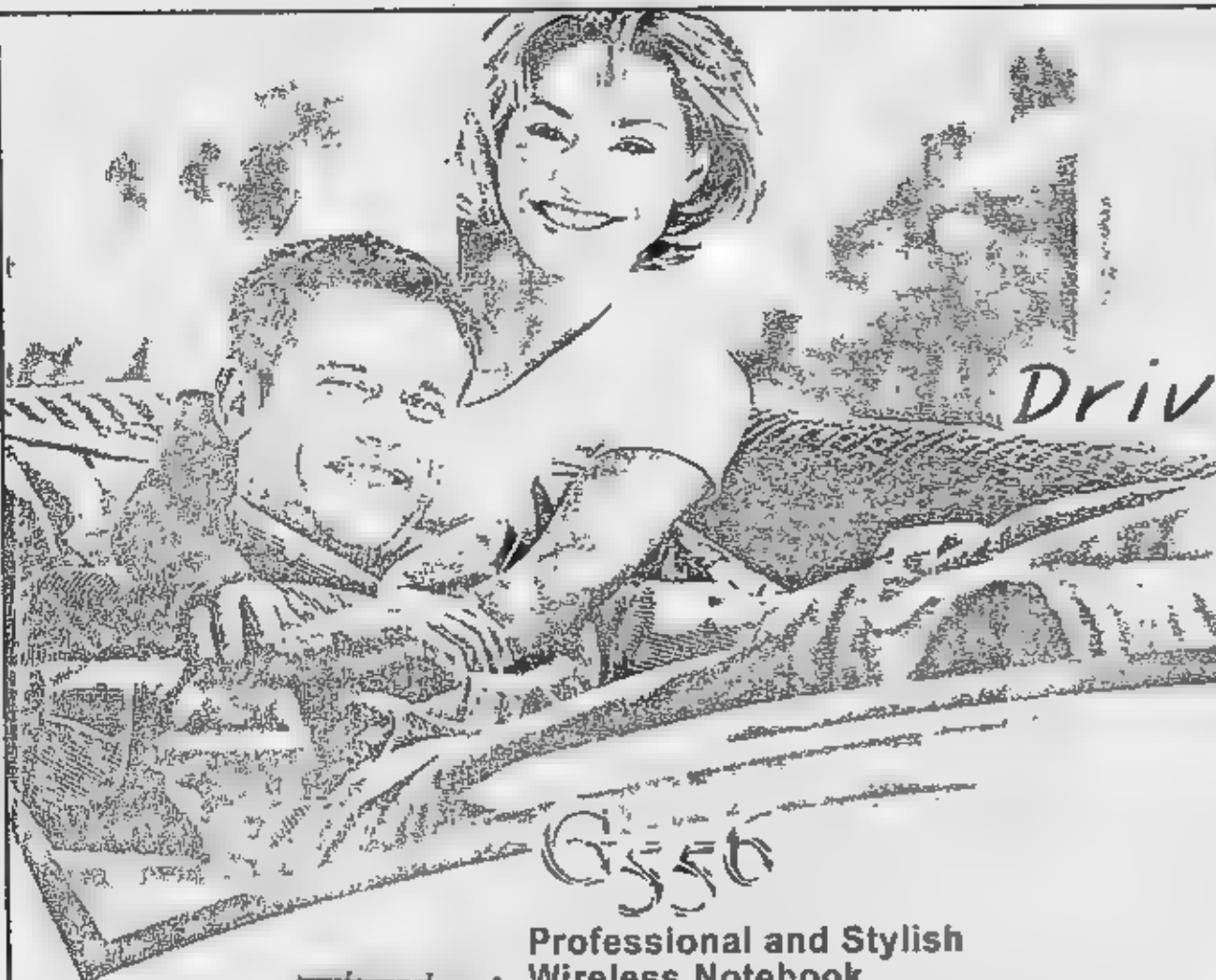
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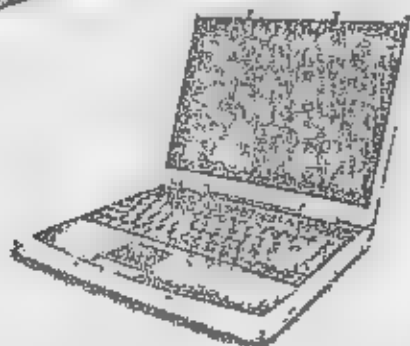


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REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF 79 PROVINCES
FY 2003

Financial Statements of Provinces
All Funds (In Thousand Pesos)

LGU	Class	BALANCE SHEET			STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES															Net Income	Rank		% of Net Income to Total Income
		Assets	Liabilities	Equity	Total Income	Rank		IRA	Property Tax	Business Income	Other Income	Total Expenses	Rank		PS	MOOE	FE						
REGION 1		5,533,439	1,368,886	4,164,553	2,963,257			1,590,787	151,848	70,524	656,178			2,155,367			1,155,304	967,416	32,646	713,990			
Ilocos Norte	1	905,512	140,334	765,178	513,781	4	30	352,028	21,967	17,835	121,951			373,013	4	40	221,213	151,800	0	140,768	3	17	27
Ilocos Sur	1	2,724,158	660,396	2,073,763	709,702	2	18	371,074	10,848	233	327,547			425,125	3	29	178,740	246,385	-	284,577	1	2	40
La Union	1	640,880	114,609	526,270	571,751	3	26	336,779	22,009	20,088	192,905			439,276	2	28	241,537	190,668	7,070	132,476	4	18	23
Pangasinan	1	1,362,879	463,467	899,412	1,074,123	1	5	930,826	97,024	32,468	13,775			917,954	1	7	513,815	378,553	25,576	156,169	2	11	15
CAR		2,592,963	455,894	2,137,069	1,827,843			1,509,538	37,754	30,829	249,713			1,663,486			912,984	749,300	1,202	164,436			
Abra	3	211,256	87,825	123,431	386,133	2	49	273,408	2,889	4,226	105,510			364,767	2	43	144,459	219,905	402	21,366	4	66	6
Apayao	3	305,369	60,586	244,782	290,480	3	64	236,949	873	679	49,980			273,608	3	62	111,668	161,910	10	16,872	5	69	6
Benguet	2	1,269,714	196,992	1,072,722	409,515	1	44	284,091	28,959	17,795	78,671			419,544	1	31	197,540	221,707	297	(10,029)	6	78	(2)
Iligan	3	298,989	49,612	249,377	250,096	5	70	237,194	2,680	4,079	6,143			190,084	5	73	139,046	51,037	-	60,012	1	43	24
Kalinga	3	252,779	27,978	224,801	257,816	4	66	258,989	1,218	1,148	6,267			231,903	4	68	164,098	67,805	-	35,714	3	54	13
Mt. Province	3	254,957	32,001	222,956	224,003	6	73	216,914	1,135	2,911	3,042			183,501	6	74	155,073	26,936	493	40,501	2	51	18
REGION 2		3,552,416	1,326,572	2,225,844	2,225,067			2,034,979	71,273	55,442	63,373			1,723,408			1,080,646	682,548	40,286	581,667			
Batanes	4	337,648	153,478	184,170	120,360	5	79	116,524	1,807	382	1,648			103,631	5	79	66,360	36,268	1,023	16,729	5	70	14
Cagayan	1	1,231,428	484,378	747,050	671,067	2	20	601,706	17,081	30,511	21,769			561,439	1	16	337,218	212,778	11,443	109,628	2	24	16
Ibabala	1	1,290,430	507,610	782,820	816,480	1	11	760,280	39,779	4,853	13,369			548,270	2	19	247,357	276,114	24,799	268,210	1	5	33
Nueva Vizcaya	2	436,351	83,542	352,809	363,780	3	57	317,240	10,213	12,316	14,009			307,489	3	53	212,221	94,922	347	46,290	4	49	13
Quirino	3	256,559	97,563	158,996	263,380	4	68	239,230	3,393	8,177	12,580			282,571	4	71	137,501	62,476	2,584	60,809	3	42	23
REGION 3		9,438,279	2,614,882	6,823,398	4,479,111			3,460,757	982,722	168,838	267,681			3,833,322			1,958,187	1,778,163	97,053	645,788			
Aurora	3	375,142	54,280	320,862	245,505	7	72	229,499	11,071	2,103	2,833			211,103	7	70	129,473	81,630	-	34,402	7	56	14
Bataan	1	937,485	213,064	724,421	668,866	4	27	309,840	171,656	17,735	69,535			442,352	5	27	244,706	185,428	12,218	126,514	2	19	22
Bulacan	1	2,271,908	572,408	1,699,500	1,251,570	1	3	806,729	289,800	79,568	75,572			1,102,401	1	2	417,753	680,069	24,579	149,289	1	12	12
Nueva Ecija	1	1,757,347	824,889	932,458	766,048	2	13	695,676	22,358	10,306	37,708			680,657	2	12	383,537	269,869	27,161	85,362	4	30	11
Pampanga	1	687,966	133,805	554,161	717,542	3	17	609,469	43,088	14,117	50,968			627,951	3	14	340,443	287,438	70	89,692	3	29	12
Tarlac	1	2,562,273	487,741	2,074,532	553,990	5	29	471,601	20,664	36,947	24,778			475,326	4	24	258,280	191,509	25,557	78,664	6	34	14
Zambales	2	856,109	318,695	537,415	375,389	6	51	337,944	24,085	7,253	6,107			283,523	6	59	183,834	102,220	7,469	81,866	5	32	22
REGION 4		15,777,122	2,779,790	12,997,332	7,590,696			5,419,712	1,474,141	149,995	546,848			6,194,558			3,110,353	2,988,987	95,218	1,396,137			
Batangas	1	1,780,541	316,776	1,463,766	1,025,049	5	8	707,687	266,959	15,719	34,673			1,018,470	2	4	466,469	561,727	274	5,579	9	73	1
Cavite	1	2,161,324	437,745	1,723,579	1,135,420	2	4	710,501	338,024	37,609	49,285			937,903	3	6	444,307	489,729	3,667	197,517	4	7	17
Laguna	1	2,696,565	280,043	2,416,522	1,300,149	1	2	706,677	430,583	45,788	117,120			1,020,687	1	3	436,862	583,763	62	279,462	2	3	21
Marikina	4	288,080	66,916	221,164	217,471	10	74	194,566	4,975	5,042	12,888			197,153	10	72	145,881	51,271	-	20,318	8	68	9
Mindoro Occidental	2	684,512	60,983	623,530	385,565	8	50	360,259	12,743	329	12,294			363,263	8	45	186,985	166,266	12	32,302	7	58	8
Mindoro Oriental	2	1,842,868	49,842	1,793,026	446,630	7	39	402,321	30,634	3,252	20,453			367,805	7	41	200,168	167,637	-	78,825	6	33	16
Palawan	1	1,523,129	836,096	687,033	756,843	6	15	738,454	9,745	3,387	5,256			646,827	5	13	343,013	240,469	63,346	110,015	5	23	15
Quezon	1	1,728,374	257,445	1,470,928	1,026,232	4	7	761,481	169,702	21,225	73,845			767,285	4	8	419,686	343,405	4,116	258,946	3	6	25
Rizal	1	2,674,382	270,232	2,404,050	1,842,526	3	6	584,849	216,542	17,088	214,048			613,558	6	15	303,233	294,465	15,859	428,970	1	1	41
Romblon	3	408,227	211,561	196,666	254,811	9	69	242,929	4,262	575	7,045			271,608	9	64	173,749	90,175	7,684	(16,797)	10	79	(7)
REGION 5		4,148,198	907,258	3,241,940	2,610,641			2,426,411	79,110	36,747	184,373			2,198,783			1,212,734	969,175	16,794	511,938			
Albay	1	1,013,953	182,801	831,152	563,073	2	28	481,538	20,531	7,442	53,563			421,720	2	30	213,994	199,377	8,348	141,353	1	15	25
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On the 1st Death Anniversary
of Our Beloved

PURITA B. LAGARDE

September 13, 2003

We would like to thank
all of you who have mourned with us
in time of our bereavement.

Holy Mass will be offered at 8 PM
at 7693 Hemlock St., Marcelo Green Village,
Parañaque City.

JUANITA CUSTODIA YASAY

of Santa, Ilocos Sur & Alabang, Muntinlupa City

November 3, 1920 - September 9, 2004

Loving husband, Manuel; devoted children Nandy &
Agnes Hilao, Hilda & Fred Vistal, Vangie & Elmer
Carlos, Gerry & Evelyn Quiocho, Eva-Rose & Rome
Austrial, Boyet & Amy Acuna, adoring grandchildren
Brian, Carmela, Gecvee, Vince, Erica, Daryl, Aldean,
Jamilie, Vynne, Dave & Kyle; relatives and friends request
the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul

Her remains lie in state at the Agoncillo Chapel, La
Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park)
Parañaque City

Interment will be on Wednesday, September 15, 2004 at
Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 10:00 a.m.
Mass & Last Rites.

Whoever
finds
his life
will
lose it,
and
whoever
loses
his life
for my
sake
will
find it.

Matthew 10:39

Anita Pablo Montermoso

(Wife of the late Juan C. Montermoso)

Died peacefully in the Grace of Our Lord
at the age of 85.

Her bereaved son Juan Pablo Montermoso and
his wife Susana Ramos; grandson Juan Antonio and
his wife Hien Tran; granddaughter Kara Noelle and
other relatives request your prayers for the eternal
repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla dela Virgen,
Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati.

Interment will take place at Santuario de San
Antonio on Wednesday, September 15, 2004. Time will
be announced later.

In Loving Memory

On the Third Death Anniversary of

Mã. Teresa (Bobbi) Espino Blankenhorn

June 8, 1951 - September 13, 2001

Her husband Ron; daughter Rhoni; parents Gen. (†) and Mrs. Romeo C. Espino;
brothers and sisters Leslie and Diana, Ralph and Cristina, Ricardo and Maribelle, Helene
and Tito; nieces Monica and husband Michael, Adelaide, Nikki and husband Giancarlo;
nephews Richard, Paolo and Julian request relatives, friends and the pious reader to pray for
the eternal repose of her soul.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered for her today, September 13, 2004 at:

St. Denis Parish, Menlo Park, California 8:00 a.m.
Mary the Queen Parish, Greenhills, San Juan 6:00 p.m.
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish, Magallanes Village, Makati 6:00 p.m.
Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Poblacion, Makati 6:30 p.m.
St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa 6:30 p.m.



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InfoTech

Text us your feedback: Inquirer @ name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor Leo Magno

Hacker finds open Wi-Fi networks in Manila

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

DRIVING through the central business district of Makati all the way to Malate in Manila, a German whitehat hacker discovered that only 15 of the 66 wireless access points or wireless local area networks located in these two areas were "encrypted."

"The encryption levels of these access points were not even secure," said the Ger-

man whitehat hacker known as Van Hauser.

Van Hauser was in Manila as one of the experts invited to the third annual Philippine Information Technology Security Conference.

Showing the lack of security in the wireless local area networks (WLAN) of corporate firms in the Philippines, Van Hauser disclosed that the "wardriving" he conducted from Makati to Malate easily identified WLANs that were open to anyone armed with a laptop and software who wanted to detect wireless-fidelity (Wi-Fi) hotspots.

Wardriving is the process of scanning for wireless access points while driving by certain areas known to have such WLANs, said Van Hauser.

Van Hauser said malicious hackers can use open WLANs to launch attacks. But in cases where open WLANs are connected to other

networks, hackers would likely access these networks and do more damage.

"If it is connected to other networks, then it becomes more interesting for hackers," said Van Hauser.

In his wardriving exercise, Van Hauser was able to detect the "open" WLANs of prominent firms located in Makati. He, however, declined to name these companies.

"Wardriving is not hacking. I was just scanning for access points in a certain area," he stressed.

Wardriving, however, is now being used by malicious hackers to locate public access points to launch attacks.

Van Hauser, 29, has been doing ethical hacking for various high-profile companies in Germany. He also works part time for Suse Linux.



ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Buzz Words, Like

'blog'

BY (TIM YAP)



When you're hooked on Addict Mobile, you're sure to be in on the word. That is, what's hot, what's not, and the latest buzz words that ring in our ears. You hear new ones almost everyday; you almost feel sorry for dictionary publishers. But it's all good. As you know, Addict Mobile is where it's at. You'll find the hippest content any wireless carrier can provide, even the latest buzz word. Like 'blog'.

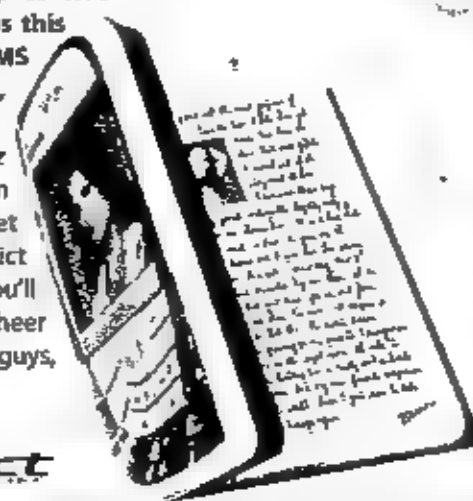
And what it can do for you. What is 'blog'? For all you techies out there, you guys already know that 'blog' is essentially an MMS and GPRS community-based application that allows Addict Mobile subscribers to share pictures and other advanced mobile content from their phone. Just like you do on your PC through the Internet.

Now for the non-techies, let me tell you what this means. 'Blog' is short for 'web log'—or an on-line collection of photos or journals made accessible via the Internet. It's the on-line journal service that's taking the world by storm. Ask Borgy or Vivien about it. Bianca too. We all love it! So here's the word on 'blog'. Addict Mobile blog gives Addict Mobile subscribers the freedom to express their views, craft their voice, exhibit images and reach out to other Blog users worldwide. It's that powerful! That's what Addict

Mobile's "CustomySIM" is all about—personalizing your Addict Mobile phone to reflect your unique lifestyle that makes you stand out and express your individuality. Borgy's friends in Manila got to check out his trip up Mount Fuji through Addict Mobile Blog. And when some of my party pals can't make it out for some reason, they too can catch up with my latest party pics and antics directly from their Addict Mobile phones, complete with my wacky captions for them to read!

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Pork barrel and the IRA: Another view

IN A recent position paper on the current fiscal crisis, my colleagues at the UP School of Economics came up with a list of proposals for downsizing the country's huge fiscal deficit. Among these are reducing the Internal Revenue Allotments (IRA) to local governments to 40 percent of their current levels and cutting down the pork barrel allocations (PBA) to members of Congress by half.

In this brief article, I will dwell on these two items not for their relevance to our current fiscal crisis but for their implications on public-sector governance.

In an article which I published a couple of years back ("Devolution and Public Sector Governance," *Phil. Jour. of Public Adm.*, July-Oct. 2000), I argued against a policy of devolution of public services to local government units. One of my major premises was that devolution as public policy has little chances of success in developing societies like ours. In arguing my case, I wrote:

"In most less developed countries, social, economic and politi-

cal institutions are at their early stages of development and are as yet unable to function efficiently. Communities are effectively isolated from one another, and development efforts exerted in any one of them have little spillover effects on the others. Local communities differ in their levels of economic and social well-being... and in their ability to manage their own resources.

Because local communities have different needs and capabilities, I argued that they must be treated differentially, with more public resources made available to those whose needs are more pressing and where local officials have greater capabilities in handling their own affairs.

However, in insisting on greater equity in the allocation of public funds, we typically require an equi-proportional (in relation to population) if not indeed an equal allocation of public funds among the local political units. This approach leads to a non-optimal allocation of government resources. Yet, this is precisely what happens with the pork bar-

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Dr. Nicolo S. Poblador



rel system of funds disbursement to local communities and the IRA provision of the Local Government Code!

Consider the IRA. This provision of the Local Government Code prescribes that 40 percent of tax revenue collections should be retained by the local government units. By this formula, relatively well-endowed cities like Urdaneta will get a much larger allocation (in terms of totals and on a per capita basis) compared to impoverished communities such as Borongan, Samar. As a result, Urdaneta can afford to build a luxurious city hall right in the middle of flood-prone rice paddies while Borongan goes begging for basic public services.

In my paper, I cited the following additional reasons why we

should go easy in decentralizing government functions: (1) corruption at the local level; (2) managerial incompetence of local administrators; (3) the penchant of local politicians for showcase projects; and (4) economic wastage and inefficiencies arising mainly from failure to factor positive and negative external effects (i.e., economic advantages and disadvantages to other localities and to society as a whole) into community cost and benefit calculations. (My article can be downloaded from this website: <http://nick.poblador.us>.)

The usual arguments put forward in favor of PBA and IRA are (a) local citizens and their administrators know best what their community needs are, and (b) local officials are more accountable to the people who put them in office. A lot of hogwash, if you ask me.

On the back of space constraints, I shall briefly focus on (b) for you to know where I'm coming from.

The relationship between lo-

cal citizens and their elected officials is a classic example of the principal-agent problem in economic theory. As in business firms, the principals (in this case, the local citizens) and their agents (elected representatives—congressmen, mayors, barangay captains, etc.) typically pursue different and often conflicting interests. In the corporate world, hired managers pursue their employer's profit goals only to the extent that doing so will enhance their own income objectives. Their conflicting interests are somehow aligned through the effective enforcement of employment contracts and through a number of control and monitoring mechanisms. There are no such employment contracts nor control and monitoring mechanisms in the public sector. For example, there is no such thing as a board of directors representing the electorate to look over the shoulders of local administrators and elected representative in Congress. These officials can therefore pursue their

selfish interests with impunity. To assume that politicians are genuinely concerned with and work for the wellbeing of their constituents is sheer folly and silly naivete.

Politicians pursue their own personal goals by catering to the needs not of the electorate, but of certain power brokers within the body politic whose own interests are at best suspect. It is this insidious but mutually beneficial collusion between self-serving politicians and their supporters who can deliver the votes (or the funds needed to solicit votes) that ultimately disenfranchises the citizens from what is theoretically due them. Entrusting local officials with pork barrel funds and a sizeable portion of tax receipts is therefore self-defeating.

If only for these reasons, both the pork and the IRA must go!

(The author is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines, retired professor of the University of the Philippines, and current professor at the Baguio Colleges Foundation. Feedback at mapsec@giobnet.com.ph)

Firm retools for dominance

NOTWITHSTANDING the continuous downturn of the economy and President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent pronouncement about the need to address the country's worsening fiscal and debt problems, many Filipinos still go into calculated spending especially when it comes to the purchase of both necessities and big-ticket items.

Those who intend to purchase motor vehicles will always consider their affordability and quality before finally deciding on what kind of luxury vehicle or car to buy.

Given this scenario, the advice given to prospective car buyers by newly appointed Columbian Autocar Corp. (CAC) executive vice president and chief operating officer Felix J. Mabilog Jr. is "not to go for any particular brand but instead opt for vehicles that can deliver the same functional convenience, safety and dependability but are more reasonably priced compared to other brands. In other words, people need to be practical nowadays, especially with the ever rising cost of fuel and other basic commodities."

Just recently, CAC, the exclusive manufacturer and distributor of KIA vehicles in the country, formed its corporate revival team primarily to ensure a well-planned, synchronized and efficient implementation of its short-term and long-term business programs.

"Our core group composed of key executives, as well as, marketing, production and finance specialists, will work closely on a daily basis and monitor each and every component of the operations from ordering, allocation of units, invoicing and collection to the required marketing and after-sales support to ensure that targets are satisfactorily met," Mabilog explained. However, he pointed out that the bottom line is to be able to convince the market that buyers of KIA vehicles will always turn out to be winners.

"Maybe our main drawback is that many Filipinos still have some misconceptions about Korean products and do not realize that the quality of many Korean brands now are as good if not better than their Japanese counterparts. Also, the philosophy of Filipino car buyers differs from that of most Americans and Europeans who buy cars for the primary purpose of transport and convenience and who choose their



cars based on functionality, safety and price, regardless of the brand. Many Filipinos still get attracted to the size, looks, and luxurious amenities of popularly advertised brands. They ultimately end up paying more for the brand rather than for the more important qualities of a car.

In KIA, our aim is to offer Filipino buyers a good and wiser alternative, especially to those who may not be willing to spend much but are in need of a reliable and dependable means of transport. In KIA, vehicle customers get an excellent value for their money, metal for metal. But most of all, they get all these transport qualities and conveniences without feeling a dent in their pockets."

Mabilog also disclosed the advantages of KIA specifically the experience of its people from the level of management down to the technical people in all areas of operations like assembly, finance and marketing. The CAC head honcho himself has 32 years of experience in the automobile industry—15 years with Volkswagen, five with Mitsubishi and 12 with KIA, Mazda and BMW.

The principal objective of the KIA business revival plan is to re-establish KIA as one of the dominant brands in the local automotive industry.

It intends to accomplish this with the introduction of KIA's exciting models like Picanto which is currently taking Europe by storm, and improved but modestly priced models of the Pregio, Sedona and Sorento to expand market opportunities beyond current limits. Also part of the program is to start CKD (completely knocked down vehicles) production of the Picanto by 2006.

After 35 years, the Internet remains a work in progress

NEW YORK—Thirty-five years after computer scientists at UCLA linked two bulky computers using a 15-foot gray cable, testing a new way for exchanging data over networks, what would ultimately become the Internet remains a work in progress.

University researchers are experimenting with ways to increase its capacity and speed. Programmers are trying to imbue Web pages with intelligence. And work is underway to re-engineer the network to reduce spam and security troubles.

All the while threats loom: Critics warn that commercial, legal and political pressures could hinder the types of innovations that made the Internet what it is today.

Worldwide Web

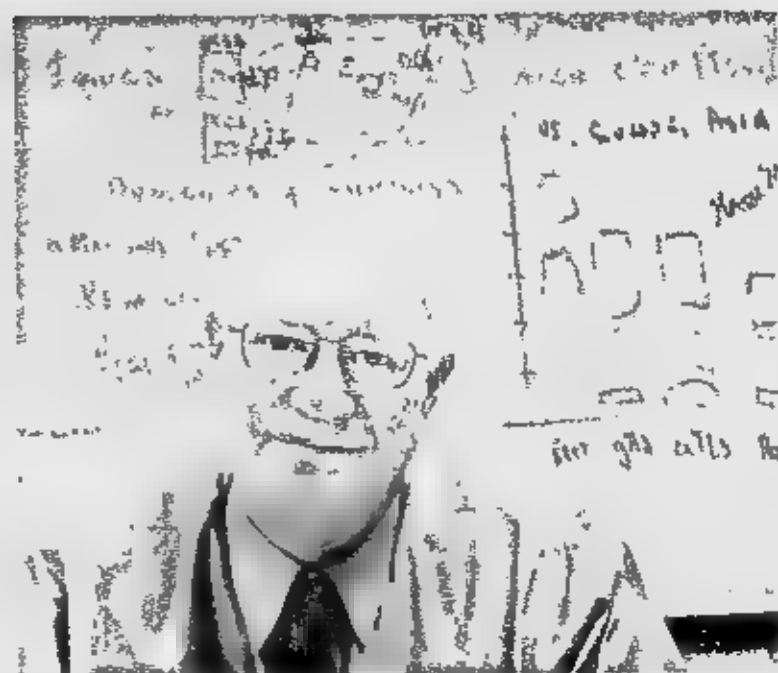
Stephen Crocker and Vinton Cerf were among the graduate students who joined UCLA professor Len Kleinrock in an engineering lab on Sept. 2, 1969, as bits of meaningless test data flowed silently between the two computers. By January, three other "nodes" joined the fledgling network.

Then came e-mail a few years later, a core communications protocol called TCP/IP in the late '70s, the domain name system in the '80s and the World Wide Web—now the second most popular application behind e-mail—in 1990.

The Internet expanded beyond its initial military and educational domain into businesses and homes around the world.

Today, Crocker continues work on the Internet, designing better tools for collaboration. And as security chair for the Internet's key oversight body, he is trying to defend the core addressing system from outside threats, including an attempt last year by a private search engine to grab Web surfers who mistype addresses.

He acknowledges the Internet he helped build is far from finished, and changes are in store to meet growing demands for multimedia. Network providers now make only "best efforts" at delivering data packets, and Crocker said better guarantees are needed to prevent the skips and stutters now common with video.



STEVE Crocker poses inside his company Shrinkware Inc. in Washington. Crocker was a graduate student at UCLA in the computer lab when the first network connection was made in what has become the Internet.

Cerf, now at MCI Inc., said he wished he could have designed the Internet with security built-in. Microsoft Corp., Yahoo Inc. and America Online Inc., among others, are currently trying to retrofit the network so e-mail senders can be authenticated—a way to cut down on junk messages sent using spoofed addresses.

Among Cerf's other projects: a next generation numbering system called IPv6 to accommodate the ever-growing armies of Internet-ready wireless devices, game consoles, even dog collars.

Working with Nasa, Cerf is also trying to extend the network into outer space to better communicate with spacecraft.

But many features being developed today wouldn't have been possible at birth given the slower computing speeds and narrower Internet pipes, or bandwidth, Cerf said.

"With the tools we had then, we did as much as we could reasonably have done," he said.

While engineers tinker with the Internet's core framework, some university researchers looking for more speed are developing separate systems that parallel the Internet. That way, data-intensive applications like video conferencing, brain imaging and

global climate research won't have to compete with e-mail and e-commerce.

Think information highway with an express lane.

Some applications are so data-intensive, they are "simply impractical to do on the current Internet," said Tracy Putney, chairwoman of the National LambdaRail. The project offers for its members dedicated high-speed lines so data can "get from point A to point B and not have to contend with the other traffic."

LambdaRail recently completed its first optical connection from San Diego to Seattle to Pittsburgh to Jacksonville, Florida. Work on additional links is planned for next year.

Internet2

Undersea explorer Robert Ballard has used another network, Internet2, to host live, interactive presentations with students and aquarium visitors from the wreck of the Titanic, which he found in 1985.

The Internet's bandwidth can carry only "lousy" video and "can't compete with looking out the window," Ballard said. But with Internet2, "high-definition zoom cameras can show them the eyelids."

Internet2, with speeds 100

times the typical broadband service at home, is now limited to selected universities, companies and institutions, but researchers expect any breakthroughs to ultimately migrate to the main Internet.

Semantic Web

While Internet2 and LambdaRail seek to move data faster and faster, researchers with the World Wide Web Consortium are trying to make information smarter and smarter. Semantic Web is a next-generation Web designed to make more kinds of data easier for computers to locate and process.

Consider the separate teams of scientists who study genes, proteins and chemical pathways. With the Semantic Web, tags are added to information in databases describing gene and protein sequences.

One group may use one scheme and another team something else, the Semantic Web could help link the two. Ultimately, software could be written to process the data and make inferences that previously required human intervention.

With the same principles, searching to buy an automobile in Massachusetts will also incorporate listings for cars in Boston.

Change doesn't come easily, however. For instance, the IPv6 numbering system was deemed an Internet standard about five years ago, but the vast majority of software and hardware today still runs on the older IPv4, which is rapidly running out of room.

And the Internet faces general resistance from old-world forces that want to preserve their current ways of doing things: Companies that value profit over greater good. Copyright holders who want to protect their music and movies. Governments that seek to censor information or spy on its citizens.

In early August, the Federal Communications Commission declared that Internet-based phone calls should be subject to the same type of law enforcement surveillance as cell and landline phones. That means Internet service providers would have to design their systems to permit police wiretaps.

AP

Leaks in the ship called the Philippines

From page B2-1

est income, and on (3) the tax on foreign currency deposits. These should be audited.

The law provides for taxes on fringe benefits and a minimum corporate income tax. Businesses must observe ceilings on deductions. The government must flex its political will to enforce the law.

Here are other issues, though not stressed in the UP economists' paper.

Debt burden

Another glaring leak is the

debt problem as pointed out by Celso Habito, former chief of the National Economic and Development Authority.

As of February 2004, the foreign debt was P2.35 trillion and the domestic debt was P2.48 trillion.

Interest payments alone—not including principle payments—will eat up some 33 percent of the proposed P907.5 billion budget for 2005.

The government should revisit the debt issue. Consider negotiating for debt relief, for longer terms and lower rates.

But do not engage in unilateral

repudiation—that will turn the Philippines into a financial outcast.

Smugglers at customs

Physical and technical smuggling opens more leaks.

According to the nation's trading partners, the Philippines imported \$45.4 billion worth of goods in 2003. But the government's figure is \$34.5 billion.

The discrepancy is almost \$11 billion, which may indicate the magnitude of smuggling. Customs agents exercise much discretion in valuing the goods, and this leads to corruption.

With experience as former Customs chief, Guillermo Parayno suggests posting the values of imported commodities on the Net.

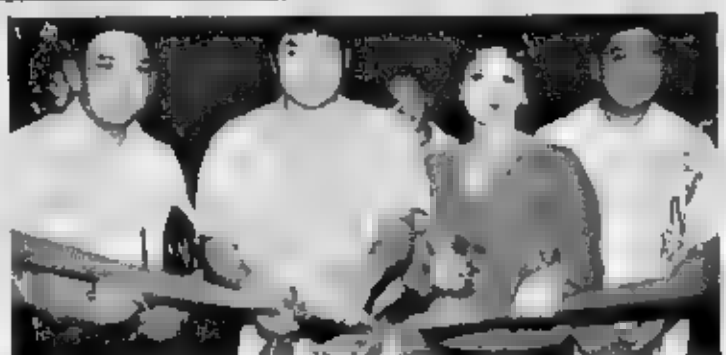
Watchdog groups can thus spot overvaluation or undervaluation.

Unfunded mandates

Finally, Congress should stop creating unfunded mandates, as stressed by former Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho.

Congress legislates new expenditures that are not backed up by new revenues. Future laws must include sources of revenue.

Comments to dennisarroyo@yahoo.com



MONGKOK Dimsum and Noodles opens its new branch in Cainta. Located at the 3rd level in Sta. Lucia Mall, the Chinese restaurant opens daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. In photo are Emil Javier, Mongkok Sta. Lucia general manager; Exequiel Robles, Sta. Lucia Mall president and CEO; Agnes Javier, and Fr. Alex Balatbat.

Dynamic duo's venture begets string of successful ventures



MALDWYN and Ruth de Pano glow with business success, personal happiness

By Zenaida S. Macaspac
Contributor, UP ISSI

MALDWYN and Ruth de Pano sit at the helm of a string of enterprises—all inextricably and strategically intertwined.

There is the classic story of fight for love and glory, which resonates, too, of ambition, will, discipline and grinding hard work.

A Fine Arts degree holder from the University of the Philippines major in editorial design, Maldwyn started his career as an artist in a government agency. He was happy designing and overseeing the printing of company publications.

"It was this job which kindled my fascination for the printing press and introduced me to the whole gamut of running a printing press," he recalls.

First business

He devoted a year to his first job and moved on to put up his first entrepreneurial venture, Bread of Life Enterprises.

Bread of Life produced greeting cards with Christian themes and Bible verses, which reflected his Christian orientation. They were then unique in Philippine market because Hallmark cards had yet to enter the market. Maldwyn designed the cards and had them reproduced in nearby printing press.

He persuaded his wife, Ruth, to resign her teaching job to handle marketing. But because she had no background in handling a business, Ruth took the job reluctantly, was ill at ease initially, but later thrived.

More businesses

The business did well and it soon occurred to Maldwyn and Ruth to put up their own printing press, named Design Plus, a one-stop shop for design and printing jobs.

The couple envisaged it to print, among other things, the greeting cards of Bread of Life, which became its "captive market."

Then they went on to put up Emmanuel Music that produces Christian music in the form of CDs and cassette tapes, whose labels are printed by Design Plus.

In the same year, they opened their own recording studio precisely for Emmanuel Music's recording needs. They named this Project Studio.

As if their hands were not full enough, the dynamic couple partnered with another couple—Lindbert and Cheryl Sanguyo—to form Music Channel Enterprises. The company produces a music variety magazine that features and promotes popular local and international music celebrities.

The Sanguyos are expert in their respective fields.

Cheryl, an MBA graduate from Ateneo, used to manage concerts and enjoys a big circle of contacts in the music world. Her husband, Lindbert, a UP law graduate, handles the legal side of the business.

Unstoppable, the couple later put up Extempo, an outfit that produces and markets a line of textbooks for preschool and grade school.

Subsequently, they embarked on a project called CP—short for "Content Provider," the generic name for a business of this sort.

CP delivers music-related content to mobile phones subscribers. It uses Music Channel's magazine materials to create downloadable music news, gossips, picture messages, album reviews and guessing games.

Maldwyn refuses to be intimidated by what he calls his "total ignorance of wireless technology."

He got his brother-in-law Chino, who has worked all his life in telecommunication networks, to advise them on technical aspects of the trade and link them to his contacts. Cheryl and Lindbert are also there to contribute their talents.

All together, they constitute a powerful team. This may well be the quintessential strategic alliance.

"In choosing partners, we follow the dictum: collaborate with people who are excellent in other fields," the couple reveals.

Business strategy

Remarkably, the De Pano enterprises are so closely linked that the individual firms support one another in resources.

For example, Design Plus prints the labels of the CDs and cassette tapes produced by Emmanuel Music, the cards and novelty items sold by Bread of Life, the magazine published by Music Channel and the textbooks marketed by Extempo.

Project Studio records the CDs and cassettes produced by Emmanuel Music and marketed by Bread of Life. And Music Channel magazine advertises free of charge the firms that allow them to use downloadable images and tones needed by CP. Even human resources are shared—Ruth, Lindbert, Cheryl, Chino.

It is a neat game plan. And in such kind of symbiotic relationship, virtually no resources go to waste.

Moreover, Design Plus, their flagship business and biggest profit maker, enables the couple to nurture the fledgling enterprises to full flowering.

Dynamics unlimited

Where does Maldwyn get all his ideas?

"I don't have original ideas,"

he says modestly. "When I talk to people, I am always on the lookout for whatever I might pick up from them. Then I try to adapt them to my capability and resources."

Some of his ideas are inspired, if not borrowed, from different entrepreneurs. He reads them, listens to them, quotes them, befriends them, takes them seriously and emulates them.

Being in business together as a couple has its gains and pains. A most precious lesson they learned is that "if the family is in trouble, the business is in trouble. Business problems creep into other spheres, not excluding the family."

Both look back to a past crisis that had assailed their relationship. Fortunately, they both came to their senses in time and made moves to reverse the deterioration of their marriage.

After a series of long talks, and intensive sorting out of their disharmony, love triumphed. And now both tend to mark events in their business and relationship in relation to that crisis, like it was their own renaissance.

Maybe it is, for Maldwyn admits having gone through a "transformation" that also spurred a parallel change in Ruth.

"We reinvented ourselves," says Maldwyn.

This transformation impacted upon Maldwyn's disposition and management style. He

stopped wanting to tell some of his workers: "Hey, you have no brains. I'll do the thinking for you. Just use your hands."

Ruth discloses they "have adopted participative management and teamwork."

Maldwyn gives much of the credit to Ruth for being able to balance the interest of the work place with that of the home.

Ruth juggles her corporate and parental roles efficiently. No matter how tied up she is at work, she always manages to attend to their children's needs.

"In that sense, she spares me from some parenting tasks to allow me to concentrate on the business," Maldwyn comments.

Frugality is second nature to them. They always reinvest their profits, such that every year they are able to acquire new equipment. And as a family they are not inclined to indulge themselves. "We don't even celebrate our birthdays," confesses Maldwyn.

Today, Ruth and Maldwyn seem to be happy individually and together. Their businesses and their marriage are both going great.

"We cannot ask for more," says Ruth.

(Watch out for "Couples Who Do, Dream and Take Risks" soon to be published by the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries and the Small Enterprises Research and Development Foundation. For inquiries, call 928-7076 to 79 or email info.isi@up.edu.ph.)

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BUSINESSMonday

Fishpond owners save the day for prawn industry

By Garry T. Pagharian
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—About 22 fishpond owners and operators have come together in an effort to save the struggling prawn business, once considered the province's "sunshine industry."

The move of the newly-formed Capiz Malaran Agri-Aqua Multi Purpose Cooperative (CHAAMPC) to revive the prawn business coincides with the local government's efforts not only to help Capiz prawn growers get back to their feet but also to perk up the province's economy, especially in the wake of the country's looming fiscal crisis.

In 1991, most of the 20,000 to 25,000 hectares of fishponds devoted to prawn farming in Capiz shifted to bangus and other products after these were struck with luminous bacteria and white spot virus that killed off the prawn.

Since then, the Capiz prawn business has not recovered, and even getting worse.

"If we can revive our prawn industry, I think it would have a very big impact on our economy," the governor told the CHAAMPC officers headed by Jose Mariano Villaruz at their induction last week.

Villaruz said the downfall of prawn industry adversely affected the province's economic situation as he urged the owners and operators to accept the challenge.

Bermejo was first to broach the idea of forming a cooperative, citing the experience of the Negros Prawn Producer Marketing Cooperative Inc. (NPPMCI) which, after its creation in 1989, was able to make their prawn industry recover from the slump.

This year, barring any unforeseen events, prawn growers will have their bountiful harvest, a development said to have been the envy of their peers in the region.

Bermejo, through the Provincial Agriculturist's Office (PAO), initiated a one-day "Lakbay Aral" on July 14 for 20 persons composed of the local agriculture office technicians and prawn growers to observe the breakthroughs in the Negros prawn farms.

The group observed that there was one common factor in the successful recovery of the prawn industry in Negros—a prawn laboratory that has existed since 1980s.

Sylvia de la Cruz, acting Capiz agriculturist, said the upgrading of the office's laboratory on Bubao St. here would hopefully be completed before the end of the year, to cater to the needs and problems of prawn farms in Capiz.

Bermejo pledged to allocate funds for the improvement of the laboratory, making it capable of conducting fry analysis and water sampling solely for prawn farms.

De la Cruz said one advantage of having a cooperative among prawn farm owners

and operators in Capiz was that they now have one voice in bringing their concerns to the government.

Audie Belargo, technician of the local agriculturist office who participated in the study tour, said the Negros prawn producers actually patterned their strategy after that of Thailand, a major prawn producer in Southeast Asia.

He said the group intended to implement the lessons they learned from the trip.

One of these is to go back to basics. They have to follow the recommendations of the local agriculture office based on laboratory results, particularly in harvesting just once a year, instead of two.

This will enable the prawn farms to "rest," especially during the cold months of November to January when the white spot virus, which is deadlier than the luminous bacteria, is prevalent.

Fresh water source must also be infused into the pond to lower the water's salinity

as the virus thrives in pure seawater.

Fishpond operators should not resort to poly-culture in their prawn farms, involving crustaceans like crabs, as these are suspected carriers of the virus.

As such, prawn farms in Capiz must be separated with GI sheets or any materials to prevent any crustacean species from encroaching on their farms.

Farms are also encouraged to put up facilities to ward off birds, which are also believed to be possible carriers of the prawn virus or bacteria.

Capiz prawn growers must also see to it that their prawn farms are injected with a cultured or good bacteria to fight off or neutralize the bad ones.

In his speech after his induction as CHAAMPC head, Villaruz was optimistic that their effort will be a success.

"If Negros prawn growers can do it, there is no reason why we in Capiz can't do it." With a report from Felipe Celina, PDI Visayas Bureau



Some 20,000 to 25,000 hectares of fishponds are devoted to prawn farming in Capiz.

YOUNG WORLD
BIG TESTS
Marlboro
RACING
SCHOOL

Jewelers elect
'exporter' board

IN ITS recent annual general membership meeting, the members of the Guild of Philippine Jewellers Inc. (GPJI) elected some of the Philippines' top exporters of fine jewelry to its Board of Directors. The exporters elected to the Board are Mia Faustmann of 7 Castles Inc., Abelardo Mondofredo of Jeweler, Ma'u Unson of Sterling Gifts Inc., Theresa Villar of VYD Jewellers Inc., Mercedes Llamas of Merceles, Amelita Co of New Life Jewelry. The other directors are Gina Mendoza of DJ Distinction House of Jewels, Manny Daez of Oro y Plata and Judy So of Venice Jewellers.

The thrust of the new GPJI board of directors is to transform the Philippine fine jewelry industry into an export-oriented sector. Among the many advantages of the jewelry sector are the abundance of gold and silver in the Philippines, the fusion of oriental and western influence resulting in a rich and varied culture designers draw on to develop cutting edge designs and the ability of the skilled craftsmen as well as the capability of the younger workers to develop their skills. While fine jewelry exports are at \$21 million, the GPJI board feels that the potential of the Philippines is largely untapped.

Similarly, government has identified the fine jewelry industry as a priority sector. In partnership with GPJI, the Board of Investments has fine tuned the implementing rules and regulations of RA 8502, Jewelry Industry Development Act of 1998 to be more responsive to the industry's requirement for a level playing field with its Asian competitors though some amending legislation is still needed. The Center for International Trade Exhibits and Missions (Citem) and Bureau of Export Trade Promotion (BETP) also supports the overseas exhibits of the core exporter group in Vicenza, Italy. Tesda and Cottage Industry Technology Center (CITC) also support the manpower training programs for jewelry workers absorbed by the exporters. With the assistance of the Dept. of Trade and Industry (DTI) brand manager for wearables, Joel Rodriguez, GPJI has embarked on preparations to participate in the Manila FAME International in 2005 to establish the Philippines as a source of fine jewelry and to orient the enterprises venturing into export on trade fair participation.

Government Warning
is dangerous

Telephone etiquette tips

IN RESPONSE to numerous inquiries on telephone etiquette, I put together some tips that you might find useful in your respective companies.

Before you answer, be prepared (this includes knowing how to use the phone/system features):

1. Turn away from your computer, desk or other work.
 2. Have pens, pencils and notepaper handy.
 3. In answering the phone:
 1. Answer calls promptly, by the second or third ring.
 2. Smile as you pick up the phone.
 3. Assume your "telephone" voice, controlling your volume and speed.
 4. Project a tone that is enthusiastic, natural, attentive and respectful.
 4. Greet the caller and identify yourself and your company/department/unit.
 5. Ask, "To whom am I speaking?"
 6. Ask, "How may I help you?"
- In the course of the conversation

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

10. Focus your entire attention on the caller.
11. Enunciate/articulate clearly. Speak distinctly.
12. Use plain English and avoid unnecessary jargon and acronyms.
13. Use action specific words and directions.
14. Use the caller's name during the conversation.
15. Always speak calmly and choose your words naturally.
16. Use all of your listening skills:
 - a. Focus your full attention on the caller and the conversation.
 - b. Listen "between" the words.
 - c. Use reflective/active listening to

clarify and check for understanding.

17. If there is a problem, project a tone of concern.
18. Avoid the five forbidden phrases.

a. "I don't know"

Instead, say: "That is a good question; let me find out for you" or offer to connect the caller with someone who could provide the answer.

If a call involves some research, assure the person that you will call back by a specific time. If you do not have an answer by the deadline, call back to say, "I don't have an answer yet, but I'm still researching on it."

There is no excuse for not returning calls.

b. "I/we can't do that."

Instead say: "This is what I/we can do."

c. "You'll have to"

Instead say "You will need to" or "I need you to" or "Here's how we can help you."

d. "Just a second"

Instead: Give a more honest estimate of how long it will take you and/or let them know what you are doing.

e. "No."

Instead: Find a way to state the situation positively.

19. Use "LEAPS" for the emotional caller.

L Listen. Allow the caller to vent.

E Empathize. Acknowledge the person's feelings.

A Apologize when appropriate, even if the problem is not your fault, you can say, "I am really sorry this has happened" and mean it.

P (Be) Positive

S Solve; suggest/generate solutions that you can both agree on and/or ask what you can do to help and, if reasonable, do it! If not, find a compromise.

(Please e-mail your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com. Names of senders will not be published.)

You don't have to take notes with this board

THE WORD Japanese usually connotes technology and innovation. Japanese products are known to be durable and offer valuable features and benefits to consumers, from automobiles, household appliances to entertainment system. Almost always, Japanese brands become the benchmark of quality for other foreign manufacturers to either compare or improve their own products.

This holds especially true for PLUS Vision Corp., a Japanese manufacturer of electronic and optical products. One of PLUS Vision's innovative products will be introduced to the local market this September—the M Series Electronic Copyboard, the world's first electronic copyboard (more commonly known as the "high-tech" whiteboard) with a built-in memory feature that allows data handwritten on the board to either be stored on the board's memory or produced in hardcopy or print out.

Distributed locally by GAKKEN Philippines Inc. (GPI), the PLUS M Series offers the industry's broadest range of electronic copyboard models that can meet your every presentation need—whether you just need to have a printed copy of your notes written on the board or you need to save all your notes just like what the computer does for you. It is ideal for today's highly-competitive business environment where professional and creative presentations can help clinch a high-profile project.

Revolutionary copyboard

With the PLUS M Series electronic copyboard, your audience—whether they be your clients, board of directors, management team, office staff, trainees, or even to just one person or to a big group, will never have to worry about taking notes again during meetings. You can reproduce all your handwritten notes on the whiteboard during company meetings and download them into your personal computer to e-mail to your head office.

With this product, you simply write on the board and with a push of a button, you can immediately print out the exact replica of your written notes on plain paper or download and save them into your personal computer on the spot. As the name implies, you are able to "copy" anything written on the board to be stored in a memory card without the use of a PC.

This does not only save your company time and money but is also an efficient way to get work done with a touch of sophistication and style that automatically enhances your company's image.

"With the product's versatility, users can save their ideas simply and quickly in digital format. The user simply writes on the copyboard and immediately prints out the information on paper or downloads it to a personal computer. So it's just a matter of choosing whether you want the information in soft or hardcopy," says Carlos Maibiran, GPI President.

The PLUS M Series Electronic Copyboard will definitely put an end to traditional business presentations as it provides companies with an innovative way to make high impact and impressive presentations. Worldwide, the copyboard is now widely used by government agencies, law firms, schools, ad agencies, training consultancy firms, review centers, engineering firms, manufacturing firms, design firms and industrial offices that do a lot of designing and planning.

Mix and match

The M Series Copyboard's configuration can be mixed and matched according to conditions of use and purpose. The unit can be mounted on the office wall or partition and is perfect for small meeting rooms and cubicles where a conventional copyboard is too big.

"We are proud to carry the M Series which is aimed at opening a new market for copyboards. By carrying PLUS Electronic Copyboards, we want to be known as a company that pioneers in the introduction and distribution of the latest audio-visual presentation technologies in the Philippines," says Mariano T. Ang, GPI CEO and chair of the board.

Having witnessed the fast growth and the relatively aggressive direct sales force of GPI in Metro Manila and all over Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, PLUS Vision Corp. (Japan) awarded the exclusive distributorship of their products to GPI which include the M Series, DLP Projectors, and other multi-media solutions. The company is engaged in selling, marketing and acquiring goods and new technologies specifically for automating office systems and procedures.

GPI, which has its showroom along Aurora Boulevard, also distributes other foreign brands like Duplo Corp.'s digital copy printer products, paper cutters and accessories, offset machines and platemakers from India and USA.

The PLUS M Series Copyboard will be available at GPI's offices in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao and through its dealers in Baguio, Batangas, Laoag, Naga, Dagupan, Tuguegarao, Ozamiz, Bacolod, Iloilo, Tacloban, Cagayan and Zamboanga.

"We are confident that the local market is ready for such a high tech product. The challenges of work here in the Philippines are becoming complicated and Filipinos are constantly searching for tools and equipment to help them cope with these requirements," Ang shares.

(For product and distributorship inquiries, call GPI at 725-9373 or 744-5450.)

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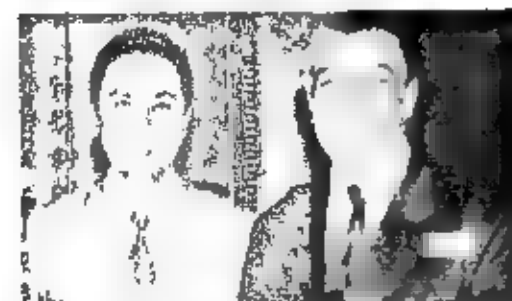
E-mail: pr_pdp@inquirer.com.ph
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Editor Aries Espinosa

Globe's Gerry Ablaza honored by TNT



GLOBE Telecom president and CEO Gerry Ablaza



GLOBE wireless business head Ferdz de la Cruz with Nokia country general manager Parikshit Bhasin

TNT INTERNATIONAL Express Philippines country manager Jose Luis Romero-Salas said the triumph of Globe Telecom president and chief executive officer Gerardo Ablaza Jr in the 2004 Asia Business Leadership Awards (Abia) is a clear sign that the country has some of the best corporate leaders in the world.

"It is high time that a Filipino wins the Abia. Ablaza is a prime example of world-class Filipino brand of management. What Globe Telecom has done should serve as a model for other Asian companies," Salas said. He added that with the continued economic and political uncertainty in the country, Globe has not only managed to remain profitable but also continues with its unprecedented expansion.

Ablaza was the runaway winner in this year's awards as he bagged the flagship prize of Asia Business Leader Award and the CEO Choice of the Year Award (given to the best CEO based on votes of other business executives in the region).

"During the launching of the 2004 Abia in March, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo urged the nation to pray for the success of the Filipinos nominated. And I believe those prayers were answered," Salas quipped.

To celebrate Ablaza's triumph a cocktail party was held July 21 at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. The af-



TNT INTERNATIONAL Express regional Webmaster Leah Valerie Sy, Globe AVP for public relations Jones Campos, TNT International Express regional senior manager Magall Rossi

fair was graced by top business leaders. Seen having a blast were proud Globe executives led by Gil Genio, Innove CEO, Rodolfo Salas, senior vice president for corporate and regulatory affairs, Delfin Gonzales Jr, chief financial officer, Cesar Murreal, senior vice president for human resources, Ferdz de la Cruz, head for wireless business group, Lizzanne Uy-chauco, vice president for wireless group sales and distribution, Ramon Antonio Pineda, Innove head for residential and business group, Roland Luis Goseco, head for logistic and administrative support, Manny Aligada, head for customer care, Aris Sayson, Innove head for corporate sales, Jones Campos, head for public relations, and Cynthia Evidente, head for corporate communications.

Other top executives present were Nokia country manager Parikshit Bhasin, Ericsson's vice president Alan Ho, Roberto de Ocampo, Security Bank president Albert Villarosa, PSBank president Pascual Garcia, BPI Family Bank

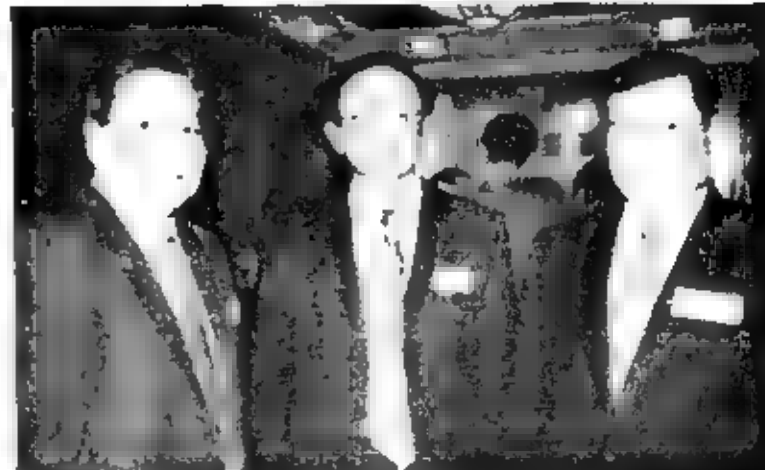


TNT country general manager Jose Luis Romero-Salas

president Alfonso Salcedo, and Ammo president Paul Ligones.

The highlight of the evening was a ceremonial toast proposed by TNT country manager Salas for Ablaza.

"This award recognizes that all of us at Globe Telecom have a great responsibility be-



SECURITY Bank president and CEO Alberto Villarosa, Innove CEO Gil Genio, and PSBank president Pascual Garcia III



AYALA Corp managing director Renato Marzan, Globe SVP for corporate and regulatory affairs Rodolfo Salas, and Globe head for logistics and administrative support Ronald Luis Goseco

cause we are going through a very challenging market and it is important that we live up to this expectation," Ablaza said in response. "We need to prove that our leadership here in Globe is not a fluke or a passing fancy, rather that what we are building is truly sustainable and enduring."

Panasonic introduces latest addition to mobile lineup

JAPANESE phone maker Panasonic Mobile Communications Company Ltd recently launched the two newest additions to its mobile phone range that packs both power and style and features the cutting edge of mobile technology.

The two new handsets—the A100 Series and the X300—target two different segments of the market and represent the company's efforts to bring more innovative phones to mobile users. These new models are just the kind of devices that

will drive more users to phones that not only boast of style but functionality as well.

The A100 Series is Panasonic's latest lineup of mini phones composed of the A100, A101 and A102 that are all simple, stylish and smaller than the average credit card.

"There are many people who think buying an entry level monochrome phone means they need to add a big brick to their personal effects. The A100 instead shows you that it is possible to have all the basic features packed into something much smaller. Taking a hint from the POP material at the local phone shops, the A100 is one of the few phones that can fit into one's pocket. Users really want the basic features of a phone, which are talk and text. They want straightforward, no-nonsense handsets without compromising on style. The A100 meets this demand as it is there when you need it, yet it is not a burden to carry around like some other phones," says Yoshihisa Tatsumi, Panasonic Mobile Communications' director of marketing for the Asia Pacific region.

"Last year, we introduced the GD55, which was the first of Pana-

sonic's mini-phones and was an overnight global success. When we introduced GD55, we were surprised of the market's overwhelming acceptance. We have seen, especially in the Asian market, that there was an enormous demand for small, simple and efficient phones. This year, we will introduce three variations of new mini phones—the A100, the A101 which is our sporty model, and the A102 which is the sophisticated metallic looking version," Tatsumi adds.

The A100 Series has basic features such as alarm, calculator, calendar, SMS, melody composer, speaker phone, and can store up to 250 contacts in the phonebook. Measuring 77mm in height and weighing just 66g, this tri-band phone with 16 polyphonic ring tones is ready for easy text messaging with a 112x64 pixel display that shows three full lines of information. It has the latest SMS and EMS (enhanced messaging system) technology but keeps it simple and reliable enough to make it easy for the average user to use.

The A100 Series will be sold at an affordable P4,990.

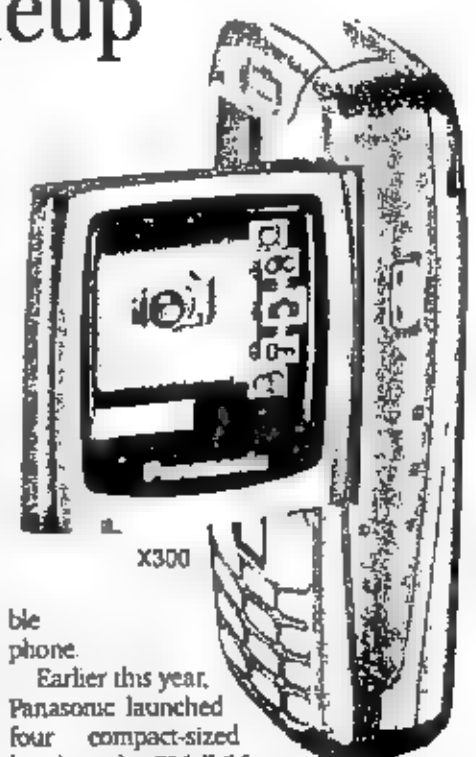
The X300, on the other hand, is perfect for style-conscious users who want the latest technology combined with cutting edge design. Created for the mid-level

market, the phone, priced at P15,000, has an innovative, pop-up screen design that transforms a high-quality mobile phone into a digital camera.

Tatsumi shares: "We are proud to be the first to offer a phone of this design that combines stylish pop-up LCD screen and digital camera in a bar-type phone. This phone, which we nicknamed 'visual trendsetter', will be a hit among the younger market, the 16-35-year-old active-type users who really want to be different."

More than just an innovation in mobile phone design, the X300 has all the essentials one would expect from Panasonic. It features a 65K color screen, video record and playback capability, 40 polyphonic ring tones, MMS, a calendar, calculator, games and wallpaper downloads to name a few. It is also a tri-band, which enables users to share pictures and video images with anyone else in the world.

With its one-push, pop-up screen, the X300 makes taking pictures and shooting video clips simple. The built-in VGA camera has a handy self-timer function on this new device while photos or videos can be played back on the clear color display. By supporting GPRS and MMS, the X300 allows users to send photos and even video clips to a PC or other comput-



X300

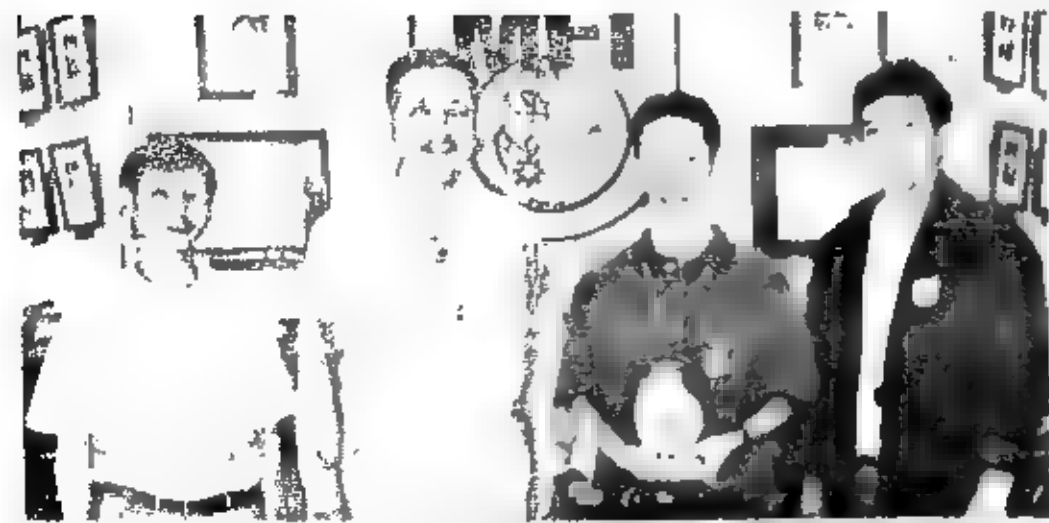
ble phone

Earlier this year, Panasonic launched four compact-sized handsets—the GS1 E/M, G70, X66 and X70—which have all received huge support from the market.

"This year, we are introducing 14 new models. We will be launching some of the most advanced phones. We have the thinnest clam shell GSM phone (X400), the shortest entry level camera phone (X100), and the thinnest bar-type phone (X200)," Tatsumi concludes.



A100



2ND METROLOGY MATCH WINNER

Corserio San Juan Jr (2nd from right) a third year scholar in Tool and Die Technology of Meralco Foundation Institute won 3rd place in the 2nd Metrology Competition organized by the Mitutoyo Asia Pacific Pte Ltd held at the Mitutoyo Philippine representative office in Muntinlupa City recently.

Shown is Corserio holding the plaque and cash he won before handing the same to MFI president Col. Alex T. Escano (2nd from left). With them are Ed Dy Guaso (left), head of the MFI mechanical department and Danny Vinzon (right), a coach from MFI.

Techno-Digital Fair

FESTIVAL Supermall brings you the latest in electronic technology in one grand Techno and Digital Fair ongoing until Sept. 14 at the Carousel Court (2nd level). See the latest in electronics, computers, and digital technology, and get all these and more at great prices! Feast on real-time games galore, and even get to play your favorites: Ragnarok, Diablo, Starcraft, and Counterstrike-for free. On top of this, avail yourself of up to 50-percent discount on state-of-the-art gadgets and gizmos in participating stores on the Techno Sale happening until Sept. 15. Among those participating are Astrovision, PC Madness, Data Blitz, Challenger Computer Store, Western Marketing, Cellphones Unlimited, Mega Cellular, Smart Telecenter, Sound Space, Avid Sony, D'Cinema in Style, Asianic, Informatics, Ink Plaza, Semicon, and Tweline Trading. For inquiries, call 850-3514.



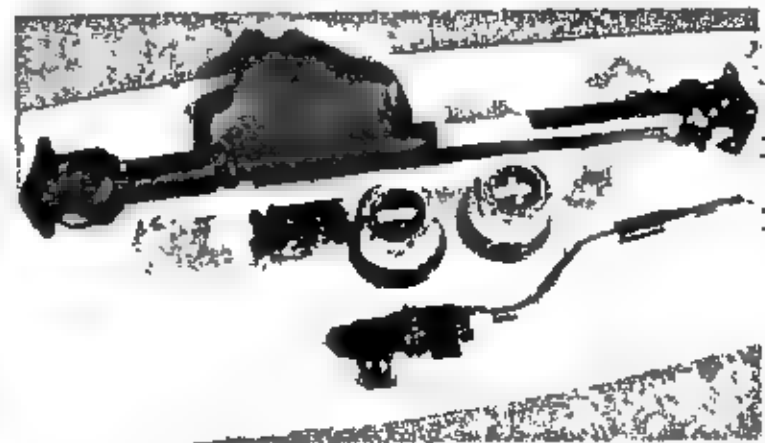
Product FILES

Unleash the Beast

FOLLOWING the success of the Xenon Bulbs (HiD) lighting system, Hummer Philippines Inc is introducing its newest product line to the local market, the HPI 4x4 Kits.

Imported from the United States, HPI 4x4 Kits provides easy conversion of your 2000 model Nissan Patrol, from a 4x2 to a 4x4 sports utility. Aside from its affordability and reliability, HPI has been quality tested and is the preferred choice of 4x4 enthusiasts in the US and Japan 4x4 markets.

Hummer Philippines offers bolt-on services and after-sales maintenance of the HPI 4x4 system. For inquiries, call 713-1998/0917-8307832.



Superb September at Manila Diamond Hotel

GET AWAY from the hustle and bustle of the city. In Manila Diamond Hotel's Rainy Day Package for September, enjoy a "succulent" stay in its finest Superior Rooms for two. Rise and shine to the most sumptuous breakfast with a choice of Japanese or Western, and enjoy the day while you work out at the hotel's exclusive gym. Take pleasure in the sunset, then have your fill of the

splendid dinner buffet at the Palm Court Café, a superb coffee shop of the hotel where connoisseurs indulge and converse. Of course, the night is not complete without a chill-out evening at the Sky Lounge at the topmost level of Manila Diamond Hotel, where you can exult in a fabulous view of a well-lit Manila. For reservations, call 528-3000 or log on to www.diamondhotel.com.

Seminar on annual report writing at AIJC

GET A clear picture of your company or your organization on the year that was. Doing this clears the road to greater heights in the coming year. The Asian Institute of Journalism and Communications (AIJC) will conduct a seminar-workshop on Annual Report Writing on Sept. 16 and 17. This is part of the series of high-performance writing and power communication

courses offered by AIJC. The seminar-workshop focuses on the elements necessary in doing annual reports. It also touches on the right format and packaging. This affordable course will be held at the AIJC seminar room at Annapolis Wilshire Plaza, 11 Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan. For inquiries, call 724 4564 or 725 4227.

Making trademarks stand out

By Eduardo C. Escaño

THE ROLE of trademarks has evolved together with today's changing business models.

The creation of brands pay a vital if not significant role in the seller's market positioning if not market dominance.

Be one a manufacturer, an entrepreneur, or a trader, the brand or trademark that attaches to the goods or services reflect a kind of image or reputation which one wishes to convey to its target market.

So what makes a good trademark?

The trademark protection system is a system created to motivate sellers in keeping a good reputation for the predictable quality goods or services.

Trademarks allow the ordinary purchaser to identify the goods or services that has been satisfactory to him and to reject those that have previously failed his expectations.

Thus, in a highly competitive economic environment, a good trademark is that which effectively conveys or connotes a certain quality of the product and at the same time, distinguish his goods or services from that of his competitors.

Moreover, a good trademark is one that can withstand the tests and challenges of competing brands.

The rationale behind the protection of trademarks is to protect consumers who patronize goods or services, perceived and experienced to have a standard level of quality and satisfaction.

Thus, to be effective in making consumers identify the source of the goods or services, it is necessary that one's trademark must be distinctive.

Otherwise, a non-distinctive or a commonly used mark or brand will only confuse the purchasers on the source of the goods.

In determining distinctiveness of brands or trademarks, one may classify their kinds of marks in a spectrum.

On one end are the inherently distinctive or highly distinctive marks. These include the fanciful, arbitrary and suggestive marks.

Fanciful marks are marks which are coined or created for the specific purpose of functioning as a trademark (i.e. Kodak, Sony, Toyota). These marks do not have any dictionary meaning but are created specifically to act as brands.

Arbitrary marks on the other hand are marks or symbols which are ordinarily used or can be found in the dictionary but are arbitrarily used for specific goods or services in such a way that they are neither

suggestive nor descriptive (i.e. Apple for computers, Canon for printers, Summit for mineral water).

The last type of inherently distinctive marks are suggestive marks.

These marks, as they are termed, suggest a certain quality or ingredient of the goods.

As a general rule, as long as the mark or brand is able to distinguish itself from that of its competitor brands without being descriptive, then the mark is deemed suggestive and is afforded protection under trademark law (i.e. Sparkle for window cleaner, Venus for beauty salon, Amoxicillin for medicine containing penicillin).

In the middle of the spectrum are the non-inherently distinctive marks.

These marks composed of descriptive terms, geographical indications or personal names.

As a general rule, these descriptive marks may not successfully receive trademark registration status and protection unless the person claiming ownership is able to prove that such terms have attained the status of a trademark in the minds of potential customers.

The principle of allowing descriptive marks to ripen as trademarks are embodied in the doctrine of secondary meaning.

At the other end of the

spectrum are the marks that do not have any distinctiveness.

These marks do not have any trademark significance and can never become trademarks.

Under this category fall generic marks or the name of the product or service itself (i.e. cellphone for mobile telephone, cerveza for beer).

A generic name can never function as a trademark since "generic" and "trademark" are mutually exclusive terms.

Generic terms can never function to identify and distinguish the products of only one seller because it cannot pinpoint origin or source of the goods or services.

A trademark properly answers the question "Who are you? Where do you come from?" While a generic term answers the question "What are you?"

Generic names are part of the public domain and are thus free for all to use. As such they do not have any trademark value.

The choice and selection of brands or trademarks are crucial to any businessman or entrepreneur today.

One important factor to a successful business is the development of one's own distinctive brand.

(The author is the senior partner of Escaño & Partners Law Offices and author of Trademarks in the Philippines: A Legal Guide)

High school graduate finds small fortune in 'sampiloc'

By Sharon Wendy A. Robas

HAVING only a high school diploma did not deter Lorena Alvero to enter a business that eventually became her family's bread and butter.

Lorena relates how she and husband Mario started making sampaloc candies in 1994 in her husband's town in San Pablo City, Laguna. With only P500 as starting capital, the Alveros couple started with only a kilo of sampaloc to make the candies.

Lorena shares that her mother used to make these candies but the taste "wasn't quite good enough." Her husband then tried out different "techniques" until he got the formula that would make what is now known as Lor-Mar special candies, a big hit with their customers.

Recipe

From a kilo of sampaloc, the couple's production grew to five kilos. Their recipe proved to be very effective as orders came pouring in mostly from balikbayans who find these products an ideal pasalubong.

Neighboring schools and offices also started to place their orders.

Lorena, however, recalls how they wasted a lot of candies as a result of their quest for the perfect recipe.

"There were times when the candies got overcooked. Of course, the burnt candies could not be eaten. So, we would try and try again until we got the right taste and texture of the candies," Lorena relates in Filipino.

She adds that the candies are "perfectly cooked" or else they become "sticky like bubble gum" or what the locals refer to as "maltagat."

Lorena says the quality of the sampaloc used affects the quality of their product. The sampaloc are sourced locally.

Lorena says she and her husband were the only ones doing all the work then.

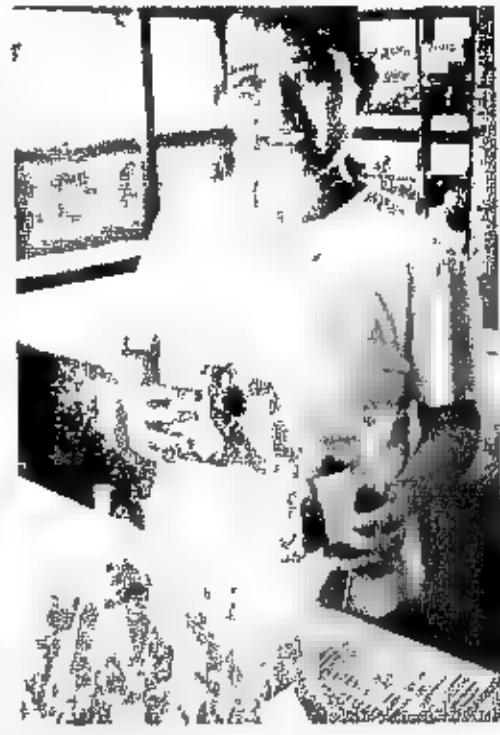
"We did everything from cooking to wrapping the candies piece by piece," Lorena says. In 2001, the couple moved to Lorena's hometown in Rizal, Laguna, and continued to make the candies.

Earnings

Lorena, 31, says earnings they got from manufacturing the candies are "quite enough to sustain the every day needs of their family."

Starting with only 50 packs, the orders grew to more than a thousand. A pack contains 12 sampaloc-candy pieces and costs P8.

Lorena, Mario and her brother are the only



LORENA Alvero

people who have a hand in cooking of the candies, which takes about one and a half hours, after which the mixture is set aside to cool before they are formed into circles and then wrap in cellophane.

Lorena says they produce about 700 or more packs a day depending on the volume of orders. Today they have around seven workers who help them pack the candies.

Customers

Through the years, Lor-Mar candies have established customers not only in neighboring towns in Laguna but also in Metro Manila.

With the advantage of cell phone technology, they decided to include their cell phone numbers in their candy packs and Lorena is thrilled about a number of call inquiries from prospective customers from other places. Although they don't directly deliver in Metro Manila, they have a number of "suki" who buy these candies in bulk and sell them in different stores in Manila.

Lorena also shares they also have customers from other Laguna towns who buy their products by trading in other food products which in turn they would also sell. Their sugar supplier also gets to buy and sell their candies in exchange for sacks of sugar, which is also a main ingredient in making the candies.

Despite the rising cost of materials such as plastics and cellophane, Lorena remains optimistic. She hopes that this venture would further boom so they could save enough to uplift the lives of their family.

Bank celebrates major customers

HSBC goes from the stage to the court as the bank recently hosted two customer appreciation events, the first for its HSBC Premier customers and the other for corporate treasury executives who do business with the bank's multi-awarded treasury team.

HSBC Premier treated close to 2,500 customers and special guests to Cinemusica, a night of music from the silver screen at the PICC Plenary Hall, featuring no less than Broadway star Lea Salonga, who led the cast of equally talented Filipino musicians including The Company, Ana Regi, Robert Seña and Gerard Salonga.

HSBC Premier, the bank's global wealth management service, provides exclusive access to special lifestyle events, ranging from specially produced concerts featuring the likes of Kevyn Lettau, Lani Misalucha and Lea Salonga—to fashion shows, beauty and wellness talks and personal investment seminars.

On behalf of HSBC Premier customers, the bank made a donation to the children of the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the country's largest wish-granting organization, committed to fulfilling the wishes of children afflicted with life-threatening illnesses.

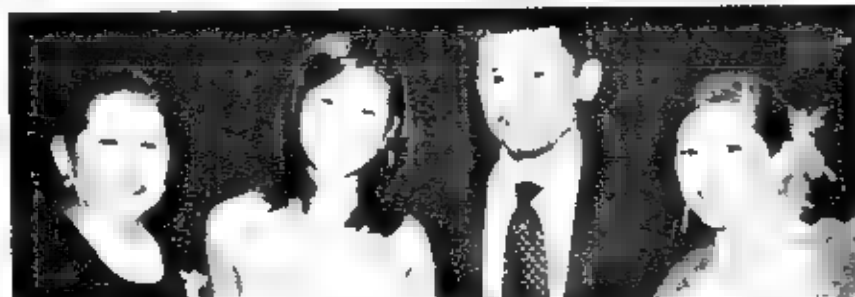
From the halls of the PICC, HSBC went to the courts of Atletico Sports Complex in Quezon City to host the 1st Treasury Badminton Tournament for the bank's treasury clients.

Trading their everyday executive wear for weekend athletic gear, corporate treasury executives from San Miguel Group of Companies, Globe Telecoms, Smart Communications, Diageo, PNOG, Total, Unilever and P&G enjoyed a day of friendly competition, overflowing with food and prizes.

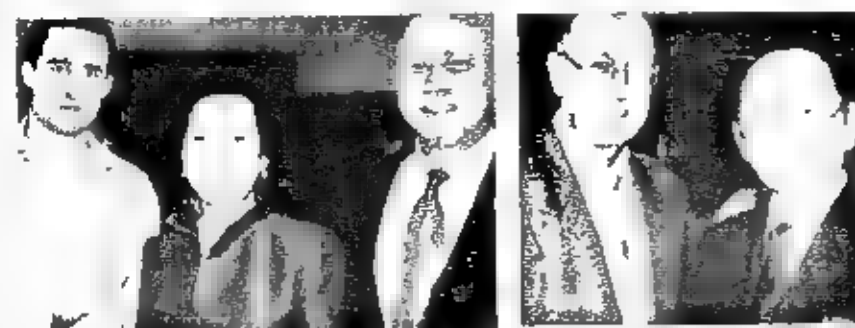
Showing that their numbers don't get in the way of their favorite sport,



HSBC CEO Warner Manning, Lea Salonga and HSBC head of personal financial services Martin Cook



INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto, Alexi Prieto, Dennis and Tessa Valdes



JON Manning, Margarita Tambunting and Ambassador Jesus Tambunting

the following emerged as top winners of the tournament: Lannie Magat and Ethelen Auenza of PNOG-EDC for women's doubles; Jing Arconcel and Elise Tinto of Total for mixed doubles; and Albert Sarte and Robert Iliscupidez of San Miguel Corp. for men's

PACQUI Ortigas and Ambassador Roberto Romulo

doubles. "These events are all about celebrating customer relationships. We develop exclusive programs that appeal to our most valued customers to help us know and serve them better," said HSBC CEO Warner Manning.



BEGO Ortigas, Chari Montilla, HSBC CEO Warner Manning, SEC chair Fe Barin and Nelly Bordinador



EVELYN Coronel and Bankers Association of the Philippines executive director Topper Coronel

Good coffee leads to successful meetings

THESE days, business deals rise or fall in far less traditional venues as the corporate boardroom.

Mergers are known to be signed, sealed, and delivered in the middle of well-manicured grass courses in between tee-off and the last hole.

Some transactions receive their stamp of approval while chasing the elusive whopping tuna over the high seas.

But others still prefer a more relaxed atmosphere as they go through the contracts while sipping their favorite cup of blissful brew.

The scent of the bean livens up any meeting or discussion. But not all coffee shops are created equal.

There are places where the coffee is not so bad, but the decibel levels of ambient noise defeats the purpose of conversation.

Fortunately for professionals who love their cup, Mocha Blends serves good coffee in a cozy and comfortable setting.

In this extended office space, one can enjoy a Long Black (espresso shot diffused in water), or a cappuccino

(espresso shot topped with foam). Meals are also available for the hungry and harassed.

The choices range from Australian specialties of chicken, pork ribs or beef to all-day spreads of popular Filipino breakfasts of tocino, longganisa, daing na bangus and corned beef.

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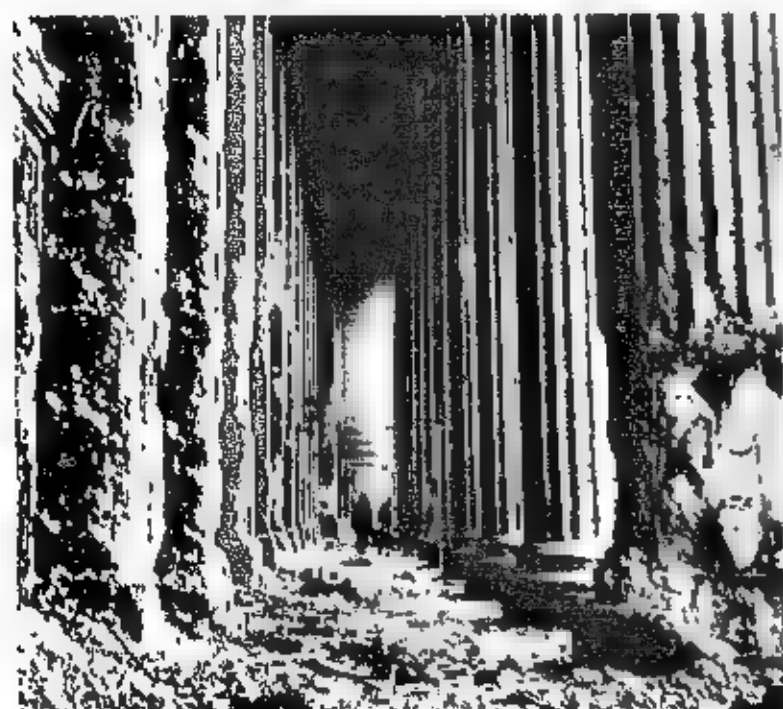
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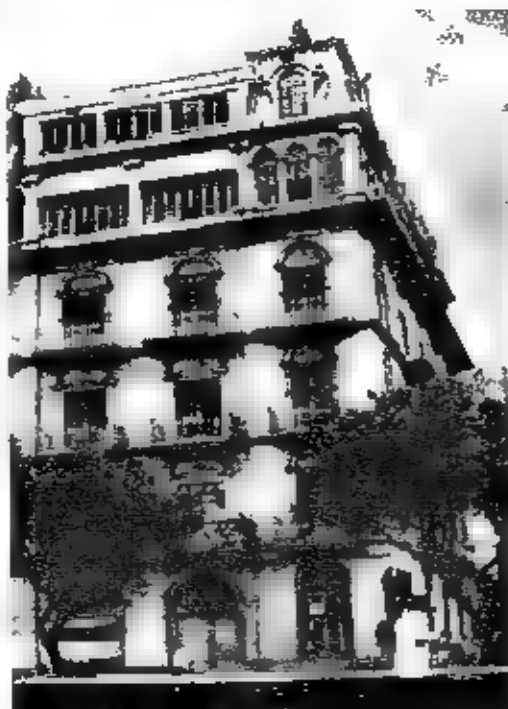
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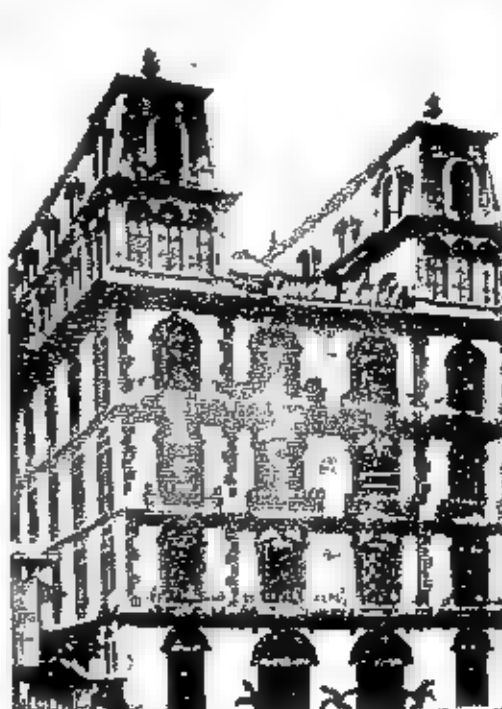
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POST office in ruins after the war



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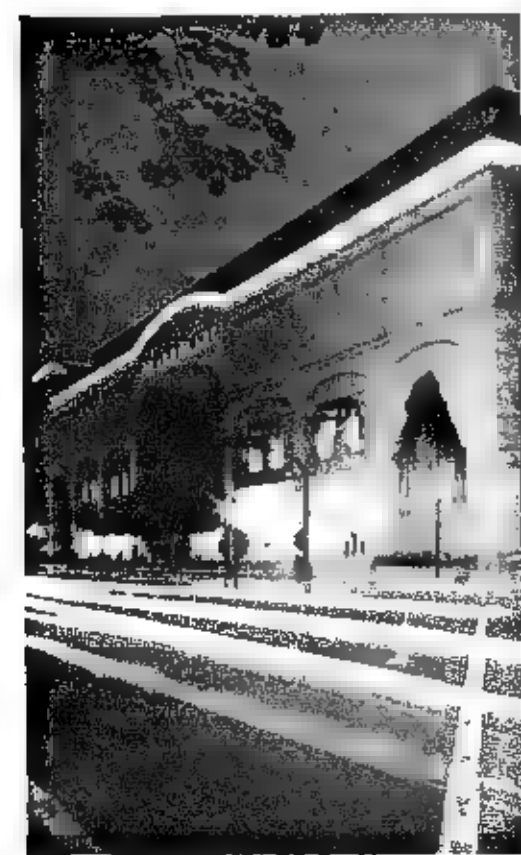
LUNETA Hotel then



BASILICA del Sto. Niño before

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Pictures worth a thousand words

THE FILIPINAS Heritage Library recently organized the photography competition "Noon at Ngayon" (Then and Now) on the evolution of Philippine architecture.

Each entry served as a historical witness that compared past and existing conditions of architectural landmarks in the country.

The former Manila Electric Company generating plant located in what was suburban Makati totally gave way to the new Power Plant Mall. All traces of the old plant were replaced with the bland architecture of what today is one of the most luxurious malls in Manila.

Juan Arellano, one of the founding fathers of architecture in the Philippines, completed the Manila Post Office in 1926. The structure was heavily bombed by American shelling

PRIDE
OF PLACEAugusto F.
Villalon

against the Japanese during the "Liberation" of Manila in 1945. The structure was completely rebuilt after World War II.

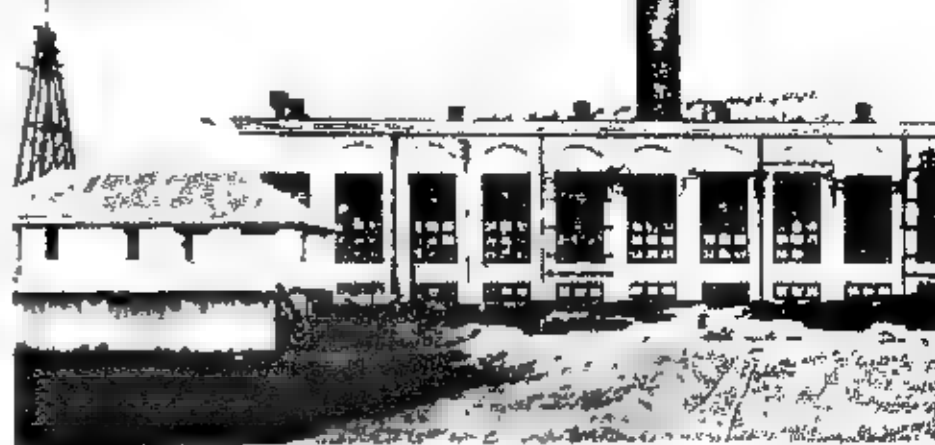
Years have not been kind to the elegant six-story Luneta Hotel that faces Manila's Rizal Park. The abandoned building has been empty for the past decades.

Basilica del Santo Niño in Cebu City, where the oldest religious icon in the country is enshrined, is one of the country's centers of pilgrimage. A concrete structure to accommodate an overflow of pilgrims who attend a once-yearly religious festival is an

empty concrete shell once the festival is over. It replaced an extensive lawn that once was a green refuge in the city center.

The exhibit demonstrates that a picture is truly worth a thousand words.

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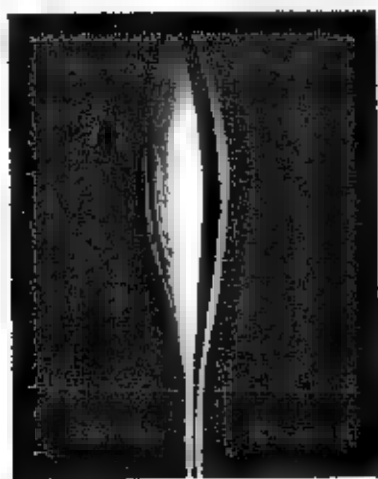
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UNTITLED



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UNTITLED

But, is it art?

By Constantino C. Tejero

AS EARLY as 1913, Marcel Duchamp placed a bicycle wheel on a stool and displayed it as a work of art, and in 1917, he sent a porcelain public urinal to an art show, and thus introduced the concept of the ready made.

In the '70s, installations became a vogue, generating among artists a craze for found objects and a mania for collecting mass-produced articles.

And still, when local gallery-goers find such stuff in art galleries, they are perplexed to the extreme. Many are disturbed by the sheer insolence, this intrusion in hallowed ground.

Questions naturally arise, if only on their minds: What are these things doing in this room? In what way can they be considered artistic? What does the so-called artist want to achieve?

And, unable to voice their inchoate thoughts and feelings, they fall into pretending to love that which they cannot understand.

At least, they have been pro-

voked into investigating the real issue here: What is art? (Nobody, of course, can answer that question single-handed, and no one is expected to solve the problem overnight.)

In a grand gesture of confronting the issue, Alfredo Juan Aquilizan presents "Black/White," 10 installations and 28 drawings, until Sept. 21 in The Drawing Room, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City.

If we are to look for someone who can clarify these things to us, we have found our man. Aquilizan also teaches art. It is artists like him who enrich the local art scene.

With a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Philippine Women's University, he took further studies in the University of the Philippines and in the Art Students League of New York, and got his master's from Norwich School of Arts and Design in England. He has been representing the country in numerous art exhibitions abroad, including the Biennale di Venezia last year.

Draftsmanship and concept

Billed as one in a series of exhibits that focus on chroma and explore "the possibilities of hue, ob-

jects, shape, texture, space and its relation to contemporary culture," this show comprises achronatic pieces selected from the artist's previous works. (Some of the installations had been exhibited in England, Paris, Havana, Fukuoka, Southeast Asia, Australia.)

A simultaneous exhibit is the artist's "New Paintings," 10 large vivid abstracts in acrylic and mixed media on canvas, until Aug. 19 in Galleria Duemila at the Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

The drawings are conventional enough. Aquilizan's draftsmanship belies the usual snide remark that those who do installations or Conceptual Art are people who cannot draw.

The big piece in Sumi ink on paper is a vigorous sketch of massive male anatomy reminiscent of a Michelangelo titan. The rest, in charcoal and pencil on paper, are finely textured studies in form and spatial relations, dimensionality and perspective, shading and blending.

Aquilizan says he wasn't thinking of any object while doing these pieces, and the strokes are spontaneous. Still the viewer can make out plant forms, the shapes of lanceolate leaves, embryonic leaves, seeds, nuts, a tuber or

"NORTHWIND"

onion bulb, and even a rift of light, a dirigible, the vulva.

What may raise the hackles of ordinary gallery-goers are the installations. These consist of ready-mades (to be distinguished from found objects), such as used toothbrushes, drinking glass, light bulb, kettle, arranged and installed in the gallery like objects of veneration.

How then does any of these objects become art? Duchamp insists it doesn't matter who made the articles, but the fact that someone has selected and put them on display as art objects is all.

Aquilizan himself arranges these banal objects in new and surprising ways so that they acquire the mystique of religious relics. "Bullshit," for instance, is nothing but a light bulb etched with the word *bullshit*, but the way it is placed on an acrylic panel with its text lighted from below gives it a certain aura it can't have if put in a socket on the ceiling.

Meaning and metaphor

"An object by itself has metaphors," says Aquilizan. "It is pregnant with meaning. It can trigger memory. Most especially

familiar objects."

Such is "Northwind," 30 white baby sweaters fixed in three rows on the white wall. The artist bought them, a sweater a day, from a second-hand shop in Norfolk the time he left his wife and newborn in Manila to study in England. Without knowing this back story, the viewer can still feel a twinge while staring at these frail items which conjure a baby in the cold.

"Don't Lose Your Head" is just a drinking glass etched with the title of the piece and placed on a lighted acrylic shelf. The luminous object alludes to the nights in England when the artist and his buddies would quaff pints and pints of beer.

Here banal objects are seen in a fresh way. "In Memory" is an aluminum kettle flattened to a sheet and mounted on a metal part of a ventilator then framed with wood planks. A pencil drawing on paper of the kitchen utensil before it was crushed by the wheel of the artist's car has been integrated into the piece.

"1 x 1 in White" is five acrylic sheets filled with rows of 1" x 1" color ID photos fixed with push

pins then hung in reverse on the wall. From a distance they look like a lepidopterist's hoard, until one gets closer and is surprised to see faces of people.

"I'm just playing with shape and texture here," says Aquilizan. "A little alteration in the object changes the perception of the viewer."

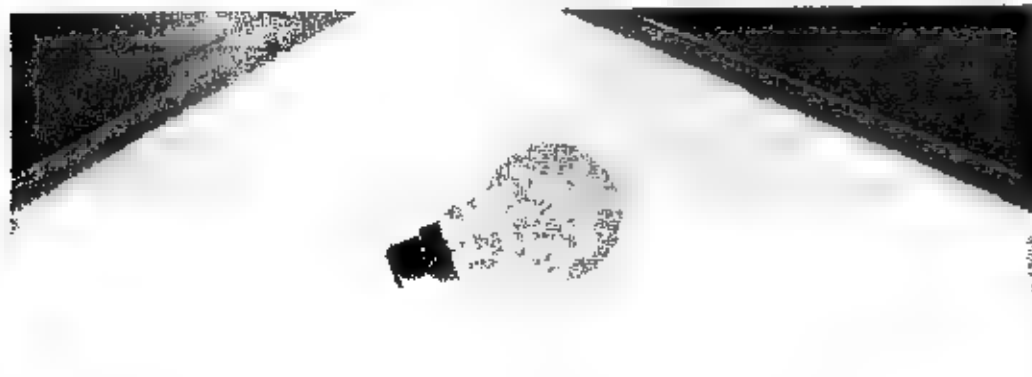
The most outrageous of the installations consist of the most banal objects. Yet they can be eloquent, even profound.

"Juan Sta. Maria," framed with acrylic sheet and hung on the wall, is a used toothbrush with white handle and black brushes, the previous owner's name written in black pentel pen along the handle.

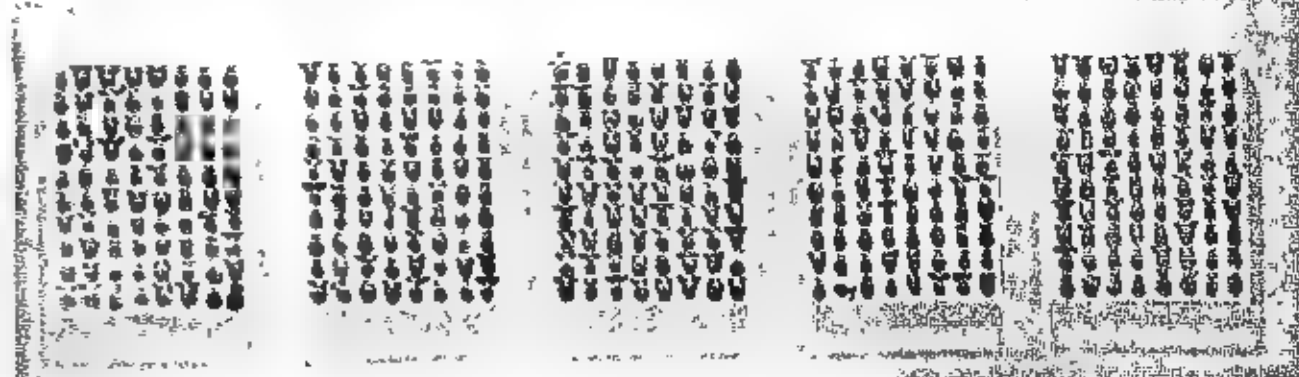
This, says Aquilizan, betrays the man's character. "In my years of collecting used toothbrushes, I have known human behavior. Some owners are shy. One had his toothbrush wrapped in several layers of plastic. It is all about identity."

"It's basically about identity," the artist summarizes the whole show. "It's a postcolonial theme."

See? It's not beyond human comprehension, after all.



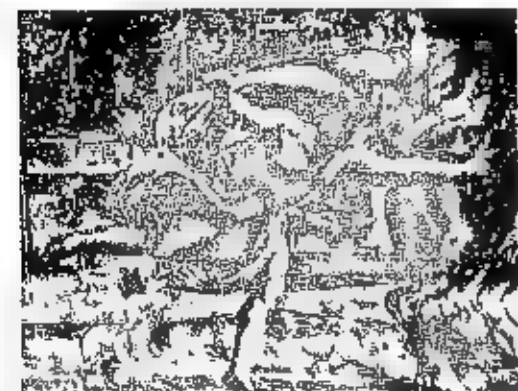
"BULLSHIT"



"1X1 in White"

5 artists toast new anatomies

A MULTI-ARTIST show at Greenbelt 3 at the Ayala Center in Makati, "Neo Corpo" celebrates the human form made in God's image. It brings together Bruhn, Rafael del Casal, R.M. de Leon, Gerri Dueñas and Ronald Ventura. It is curated by Juana Manahan with the collaboration of Firma, Makati. The show opens on Sept. 16 at 6 p.m.



"RAPHAEL Series," by R.M. de Leon



"CEZRICS Batch3," by Bruhn

Manahan, who is taking up History of Art with Material Studies at the University College, London, said the artists were chosen for their "excellence in draughtsmanship and composition given the theme of the body."

Manahan said that although a sponsor of the show is the Belo Medical Group, a leading cosmetic clinic, the show "has nothing to do with the physical alteration of the actual human body, but rather with the way that the human body has been thought of and reinterpreted over the years by different artists and different movements."

She further explained: "This had nothing to do with altering liposuction and breast implants, but rather the canon of proportion changing with new ideals of beauty and mathematical advances regarding proportion."

Aside from curatorship, Manahan has taken a special interest in conservation and art history. In her first year at University College, she completed a course under Bromwyn Ormsby, a restorer for the Tate Museum. In subsequent years she finished basic methods and materials classes of European artists and courses on paint analysis and preventive conservation. In the painting analysis unit, she was trained to look at pigments in paintings to help determine authenticity, learned different methods of conservation and restoration, and planning for museums and art institutions.

She said that conservation and restoration are skills needed in the Philippines.

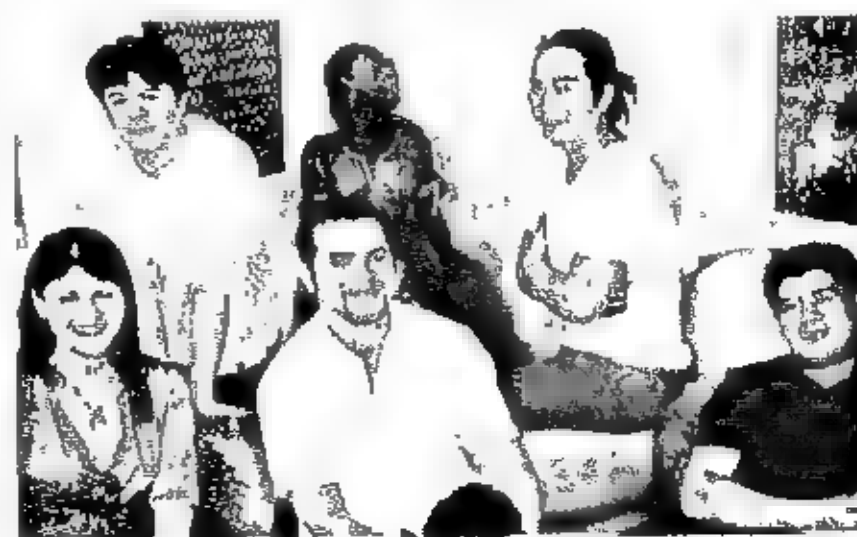
"Other countries invest money in



BY RONALD Ventura

the restoration, conservation of their national collections; art is given a high priority when it comes to government funding," she said. "Until this country does the same, it will only be those private clients and select paintings from the nation's collec-

tion that will undergo proper treatment. Obviously this country has a lot more to worry about... The government budget may not be sufficient for this, but we are lucky that there are patrons who support art restoration."



JUANA Manahan, De Leon, Bruhn, Ventura and Gerri Dueñas

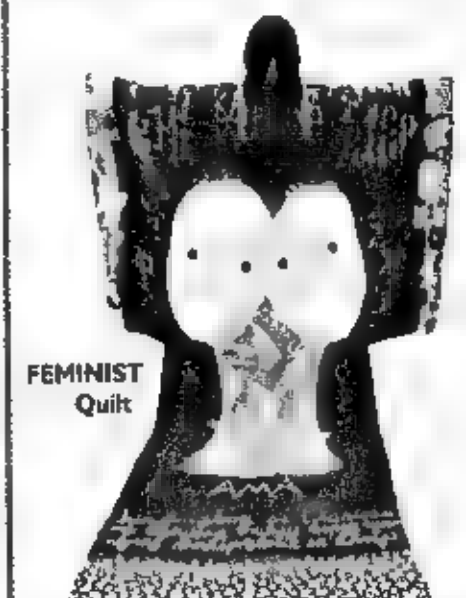
Quinto exhibit at UST

IN "SOFT Dreams and Bed Stones," Alma Quinto, an artist and art educator who advocates women empowerment, mobilizes fiber and foam and reforms them to produce works that signify what she describes as "the struggle of memory against forgetting."

Her works have playful and dreamlike qualities. They are interactive to a certain extent, but essentially tragic and critical, composed of tapestries, installations and soft sculptures of toys culled from Philippine mythology and folk stories, and a bed, shaped in the form of the babayan or ancient priestess.

This exhibition was shown in Cuba last October, where Quinto was the only Filipino artist invited to the prestigious Octa Biennale de Habana. It is also its homecoming, after an invitational exhibition at the Heme Onstad Kunstcenter, Norway last February.

"Soft Dreams and Bed Stones" will be launched Sept. 17, 6 p.m., at the UST Museum of Arts and Sciences, Main Building, University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila, and will run until Oct. 29.



FEMINIST Quilt

Art in ultrasound

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

DURING gestation, expectant mothers are advised to listen to classical music to enhance the fetus' brain development. Some actually place headphones against their swollen bellies to bring the enriching melodies closer to the growing being.

This is beneficial even after the child is born. There are several alternatives, though. One of them is womb sound, a recording of what the infant would have been lulled with while in the uterine confines. It is actually a muffled combination of the mother's heartbeat and gurgling digestive tract. Not exactly comforting, but it does just that. In duplicating the orchestra of the internal organs, the baby is supposedly enveloped once more in security.

This has been simulated by Buen Calubayan, who earned his Fine Arts degree at the University of Sto. Tomas and now teaches there. In his studio, what an artist would otherwise call home, he has set up an artistic womb of sorts and mounted an exhibit that runs through September dubbed "Walang Koro."

Hyper-real atmosphere

Calubayan's space is a structure behind that of his landlord's home. Its lower level is concrete and the upper, wooden. That it is in La Loma, with *lechon* and the cemetery in such close quarters, gives one a sense of the hyper-real.

Here, he conceives his art. It is dark, save for the spotlight trained on the central showpiece. One is assaulted by noise from a hidden source. It seems it is a recording made in the course of a jeepney ride. Horns baying, mufflers chortling, the "Pazu" of passengers at their stops.

What of his progeny then, if his womb's sound is the city's din?

He utilizes the walls, the ceiling and even the floor, his use of space very much like an enveloping uterus. "Jelo Submarine" is what he calls his alternative atelier, playful yet still alive to a womb.

In the middle of the room is a dilapidated wooden chair. Opposite this is a box-type framed piece suspended by nylon strings from the ceiling. Layers of plaster of paris give it a swathed appearance. A placenta perhaps? This parceled look is magnified by wire twisted around at different angles.

The floor is covered with charcoal, sometimes scratched to serve as a writing tablet for Calubayan's occasional poetry. His mother visited him once, and he arrived to find that the cement had been scrubbed clean.

The artist says his art is a protest



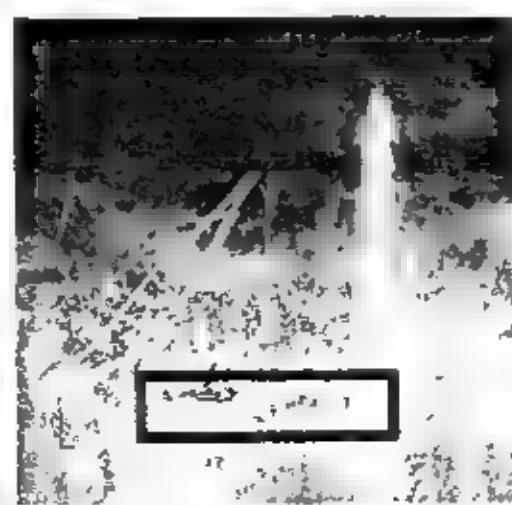
"UNTITLED"



"WHITE"



"DEAD Wish"



"UNFULFILLED"

Exciting young artist Buen Calubayan transforms his home into a searing installation of self-searching

against everything. The chair is empty because it stands for the unattainable, a position everyone wants, the place where each person wants to be.

The mixed media work is so wrapped because underneath it is something that should be seen, but the viewer is denied a peek. One may associate a protectiveness to this, like that of a parent.

All these are part of an outlook strongly laced with Dadaism.

"Dada" is the French word for hobbyhorse, the name having been chosen by its inventor after random flipping through the pages of a dictionary. The movement began as a protest against the First World War. Writers and artists eventually broadened its scope, resulting in the repudiation of conventional art and writing, to a point where everyday things were deemed objects d'art.

Among the common Dada performances was the simultaneous recitation of varied written works. Thus, the resulting chorus was cacophony, incomprehensible.

Defying convention

Calubayan's titling of his works is Dadaistic. Still, his executions cannot be seen as an exegesis of Dadaism. Not all of them defy convention, as in those that hang against the walls and up at the ceiling.

On wood, with edges purposely chipped by hand, is "White." Through the haze of white, mottled earth tones and a few strokes of red is a Rubenesque nude.

In "Tribute to Hail," the mottled theme pervades, filling the whole canvas with moss green, vermilion, ochres, siennas and black. Again, phantom-like is the figure of a man. He appears about to fade,

blend into, or on the other hand, emerge out of, the blur. On the left side are eyes with brows afloat, their stare penetrating.

The same wraith's eyes, without brows this time, are in "Dead Wish." Done in watercolor, brighter than most of his works, the pale blues and lively yellows tinged with orange, purple and a few scattered small black flowers, are an anathema to the melancholic gaze and the work's title.

With "Untitled," Buen seems to subscribe to Hinduism. A wooden bench like a short church pew is seen at the base of what may be a huge tree trunk. According to him, although the seat is the focal point to the viewer, it is forlorn and alone.

When asked to expound on his compositions, he demurs and says that explaining is difficult. But at other times, he tells of varied sim-



"TRIBUTE to Hail"

uli such as the passing away of his father or past courtships.

Strangely, the same man who subscribes to defying the parameters of convention is also adept in classical traditions.

In this exhibition, he reveals his many facets. Definitely, Calubayan is an eclectic artist. His style cannot be pinned down. Suffice to say that he has done what he most wants to: refute the charge that abstraction is an excuse for those not

skilled in the figurative, by combining his streaks and splashes with the representational.

Art, he says, is his soul. Thus he gives birth to formidably organic pieces of art, despite the supposedly chaotic gestational soup they had been nurtured in.

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"RETABLO"



"BROUGHT To My Senses"



OMI Reyes with his Nude painting

Swept away by his musical muse

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

"Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."
—Berthold Auerbach

AFTER two decades of fervid activity, the artist Romeo (more popularly known as "Omi") Reyes has finally chosen his musical muse as the unifying theme for his new oeuvre in his 13th solo exhibition.

Unknown to his friends and colleagues, the artist has always had an ear for good music, the kind that is originally written or composed for a particular instrument. That was of course before painting got the better of him.

This, the artist is wont to admit, is borne out of a strong affinity with various musical instruments, the stringed group particularly, such as the violin and the guitar, which he is able to play with remarkable dexterity. A daughter, now in her teens, is equally adept with the guitar, and it is not unusual for the father and daughter to casually embark on a familial concert of sorts in the Reyes home.

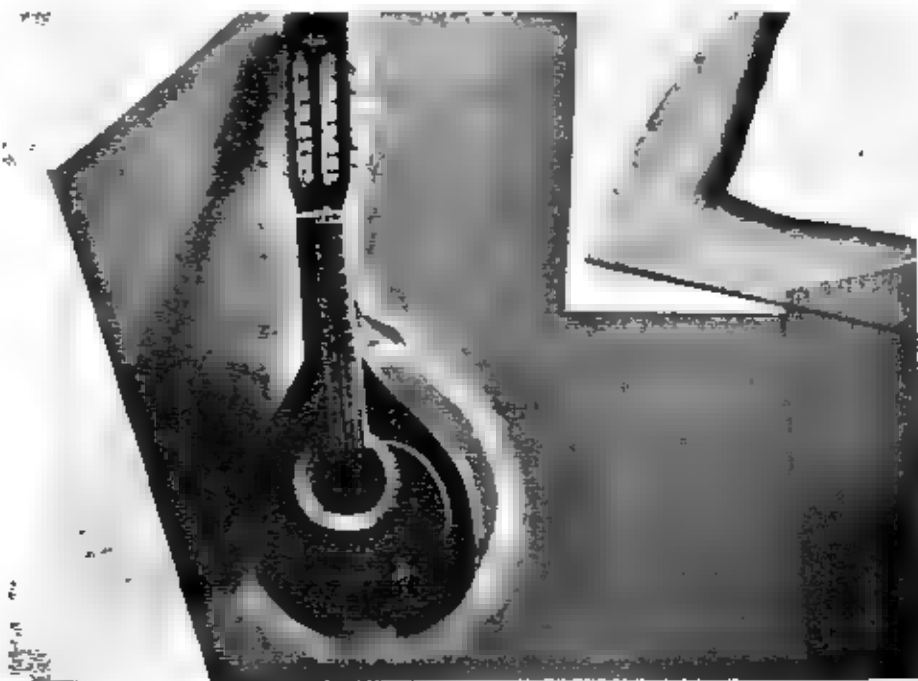
Endearing imagery

It is in this show, billed "Omi's Symphony (Reborn By Music)," (Art Space,

In his new exhibit, Omi Reyes presents a suite of paintings that dramatizes the innate power of music for healing and regeneration

3/F Glorietta Bldg., Ayala Center, Makati City, until Sept. 22), that Reyes has been able to harness the innate power of music to refresh the soul, with a suite of paintings that dramatizes the function of healing and regenerating the mind, body and spirit.

For many years, until his last show a couple of years ago, Reyes has spun endearing imagery of the still-life and the landscape as lofty, indeed religious, subjects to explore in his canvases. In fact, a recent project was the mural of a huge retablo at the main altar of the Holy Family Church in Quezon City, the making of which proved to be a truly ennobling ex-



"NATURAL Thing"



"HERE'S To My Lady"

perience for the painter.

In the canvases, invariably subsumed by their predominantly musical orientation as dramatized by the presence of the violin and the guitar (with the saxophone vying for attention, too), Reyes has created a life-enhancing environment, the milieu filled not with the obligatory clutter of CDs and karaoke hardware, but with the quiet company of violin, sheaves of musical notations underneath or beside it, the softly billowing sheets strewn around, and the drapery on the windows fluttering in the wind.

Here, amid this musical corner the artist calls sanctuary, Reyes invites the spectator to commune with the muse simply by touching the artifacts on table tops, or listening to the melodies as they waft through the air.

The random grouping of these objects—the subdued symmetry of instruments vis-à-vis the untamed clutter of these surrounding fixtures, drapes and

all—clearly establishes a nook in the home where space is a luxury and music a welcome diversion, if it is not a familial passion that binds the Reyes family.

Visually alluring

What makes the works visually alluring is the dramatic massing of the chromatic values, creating a chiaroscuro of deep earth hues, terra cottas, mauves, browns and beiges. The artist's penchant for terra cotta is echoed by the ubiquitous earthen jars bearing the slinky figures of animals embossed on their surface.

What is most pronounced is the quality of illumination in these compositions, a rare kind of drama taking place simply between light and shadow, the magisterial presence of music dominating the otherwise quiet surroundings.

One must be reminded that Reyes is and has always been a fervid colorist, but his palette seems to have finally ripened, and so has the brushwork that is unerring in exactitude and mellifluous in its movement.

Twenty years of non-stop artistic activity have done wonders for the artist who has long dabbled in florals and landscapes, and still does, but with the kind of ease and fluidity that have set him apart from commercially aligned craftsmen. Having worked for many years as resident artist of the now-defunct Alegria, he later hooked up with Pintanaw, a close-knit group of artists, many of whom paint in the realistic genre.

It is in this September show that Reyes has indeed come of age, an epiphany that, purified by the trials and triumphs that came his way, has finally reached its climactic stage. With music as lover, muse and inspiration, he has captured the distillation of art, echoing the message of Khalil Gibran: "the soul of music is of the spirit, and her mind is of the heart."

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Veneration at West, Gorospe at Finale, Badajos at Podium, Cabangis and Doloricon at Mag:Net

WEST Gallery features Roy Veneracion's "Chakras: The Regions of Power" on Sept. 16-28 at Glorietta 4, level 3 Ayala Center, Makati. Combining abstraction, spiritual-metaphysical meditation and deep psychological penetration, Veneration takes viewers

VISUAL ARTS

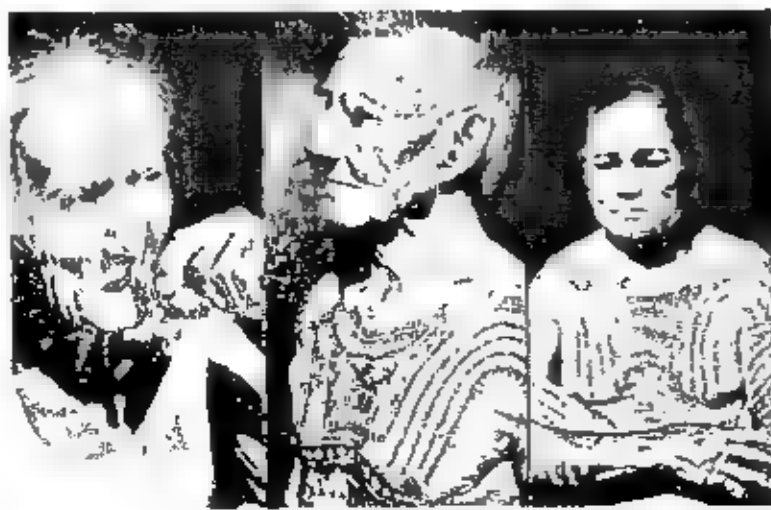
into a dreamlike world that may be a product of the suppressed unconscious. Call 7527028

FINALE Art Gallery presents Waling Gorospe's "Cultural Foreground" on Sept. 14-26 at 4/L, Megamall A. The artist focuses on riveting images of Kalina, minorities, the elders of Kalinga and Basao. Call 6342410

HAGONDY artist Nilo Badajos will mount a show of recent works at the lobby of The Podium on Sept. 15-21. An apprentice of Romulo Gaciano, Badajos has carved his own niche as an impressionist painter of rustic landscapes, seashore sunsets and farmfolk. A member of Buacan's Lakan Sining, he's a figurative painter in the classical tradition who paints gentle rural scenes being eroded by industrialization. His show is organized by the Art Circle. Call 6333659 or 09202638463.



"TO Your Unconscious Hallucinatory State," by Roy Veneracion



"CULTURAL Foreground," by Waling Gorospe



"PAUWI Mula Sa Pastulan," by Nilo Badajos

NEIL Doloricon holds "Alamat" at Mag:Net Quezon City (EJL Center, ABS-CBN Compound, 4100995). The social realist shows rubbercut prints exploring contemporary issues. Recognized for his sharp visual allegories of prevailing social realities, Doloricon now explores the potential of traditional Philippine myths to convey social and historical issues.

BENJAMIN Isla Cabangis, meanwhile, presents new abstracts at Mag:Net Gallery Makati (Paseo de Roxas and Sedeno St., 8177895). "unprint" testifies to the artist's explorations of texture as a formal signifier of memory, historical allusions, and nostalgia. The artist applies various two-dimensional and sculptural pro-

cesses from the traditional technique of glazing to more contemporary resources, such as scraping, incising, and producing imprints on canvas.

SHANGRI-LA Plaza's Art Plaza is holding the one-man show of Pamel Enciso until Sept. 23. It will be followed by "Quadro," an exhibit by Norman Dreo, Ofie Maria, Harms Bagtas and Anser Sebastian from Sept. 24 to Oct. 6. The exhibits are held at the Artistree of Art Plaza on level 4. Call 6337851

GALERIA de las Islas mounts "Buhay Puro sa Kahoy" by Frank Gajo and Fred Lava until Sept. 28 at the third floor, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St. Intramuros, Manila. The exhibit

features the artists' recent works using Philippine hardwood in rendering Philippine scenes, genre figures and religious icons.

NINA Chanco Libatique recently mounted an exhibition of works entitled "Being/Not Seen, a Myopic Reality Series" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The exhibit revolved around the concept of constructing/creating paintings that also function as projection tools.

ON-THE-SPOT painting sessions with the Painters Club of the Philippines have been a regular activity of Galeria de las Islas. The artists who participated in the recently held session were Jes Garcia, Domeng Laborado, Roland Santos, Nik Masangay Jr. and Ronald Cortez. Galeria de las Islas is open to all interested parties who would like to sponsor the group in an on-the-spot painting session. Call 5272113 or e-mail galeria@silahis.com

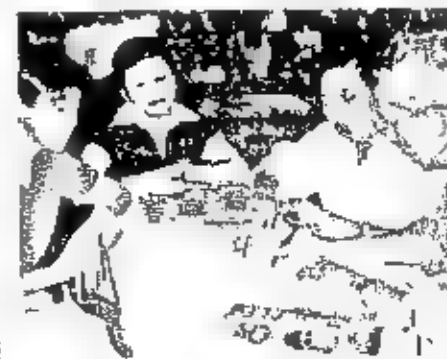
ART INFORMAL (277 Connecticut St., Greenhills East) will hold the workshop, "The Visual Alphabet: A Basic Understanding of the Visual Elements for Greater Appreciation of the Visual Language." Artist Jose John Santos III will facilitate the lecture-workshop starting Sept. 18. The workshop will run for eight Saturdays until Nov. 6. Call 7258518 or e-mail artinformal@yahoo.com

"JOSE," by Frank Gajo



AND THE WINNERS are... The team leaders hold up their winning pieces.

PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO



JUDGES Jill Quimpo-Paredes, editor of Art Attack Magazine, Nina Lim-Yuson, Museo Pambata executive director, and architect Bong Recio get some last-minute briefing from organizer Rita Neri (second from right).

Art Attack comes to town

ART Attack, the popular show on Disney Channel, is now in a magazine.

Some 40 teams representing different schools joined the Big Art Attack competition last Sept. 4. The competition marks the launch of the magazine "Art Attack Magazine," which is available in all National Bookstores and is published by Marathon Publishing Co., Inc., via a licensing agreement with Fun Characters Inc., the marketing licensee of the Walt Disney Co.

Twenty teams were chosen during the first phase of the Big Art Attack competition at the Ramon Magsaysay Center. These teams will move on to the second phase on Sept. 18 at the Museo Pambata, where 10 teams will be chosen to compete in the Big Art Attack finals at the Alabang Town Center on Oct. 2. At stake is P100,000 worth of prizes.

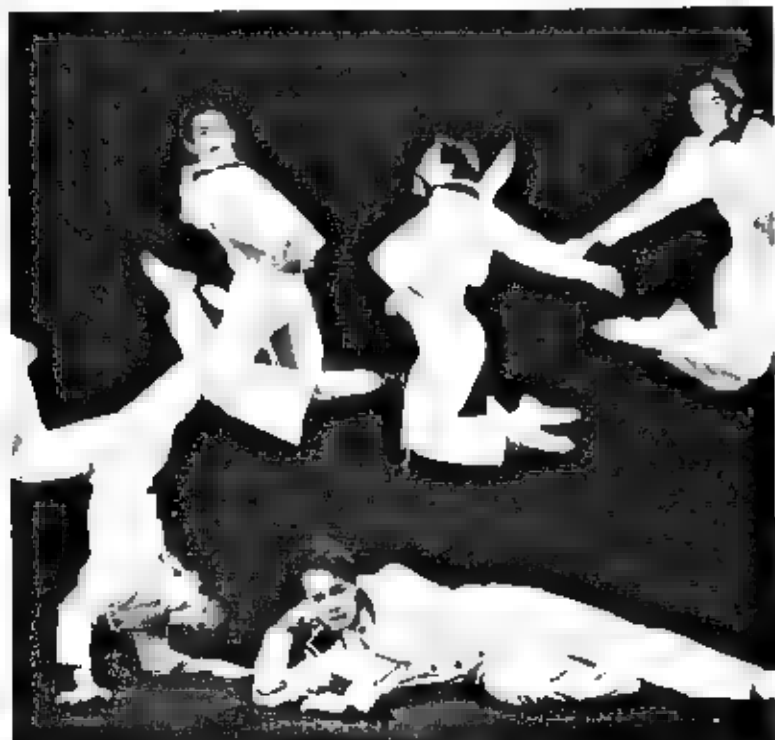
The competition is supported by Smart Kid, Del Monte Pizza Sauce, National Bookstore, SunKist, Selecta Moo Milk, Swift and Baby Magazine. It is organized by Rita Neri.

The Magsaysay Center turned into a mini-art gallery, as the various artworks were put on display. The judges, led by architect Bong Recio, Museo Pambata executive director Nina Lim-Yuson and Art Attack editor Jill Quimpo-Paredes said they were impressed with the works of the children, who used recycled materials.

To further tap into the creative talents of Filipino children, a mini arts and crafts session was held with Arlene Sun and Jan Gonzales.

The Big Art Attack competition is expected to instill the value of recycling in children by requiring them to use common materials and reusable ones.

'Madame Butterfly' in ballet premieres Sept. 16



CHOREOGRAPHY is by Thomas Pazik.

THE PHILIPPINE Ballet Theatre is set to enthrall ballet lovers yet again with the full-length ballet "Madame Butterfly" at the CCP this September.

Choreographed by Thomas Pazik to the music of Giacomo Puccini's opera, the production will feature the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of its newly installed musical director, Eugene Frederick Castillo.

World-renowned Filipina ballerina Maikui Mañosa returns to the Philippines with Graham Lustig to restage the ballet for the PBT. Lustig is an award-winning and internationally recognized choreographer and teacher, whose ballets have been performed in four continents.

"Madame Butterfly" is the story of a young geisha's love for an American naval officer and his ultimate betrayal.

Pazik choreographed the ballet and had his favorite dancer,

Maikui Mañosa, dance the lead role of Cio-Cio San during its world premiere in Manila in 1991. On his death bed, he bequeathed the ballet to Maikui, who promised him that she'd let it be known by the world.

"Madame Butterfly" opens at the CCP's Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo on Sept. 16 at 8 p.m. The show will run until Sept. 19, with matinee shows on Sept. 18 and 19 at 3 p.m. Tickets are available at the CCP Box Office, TicketWorld and the PBT for P600 (orchestra center), P500 (orchestra side), P200 (balcony I), and P100 (balcony II). Upper box tickets are P1,000, lower box P2,000 and parterre boxes are P4,000. Students get a 50-percent discount on orchestra and box seats, while senior citizens get 20-percent off.

Call the PBT office at 6328848, the CCP Box Office at 8321125 loc. 1409 or TicketWorld at 8919999.



MAIKUI Mañosa and Graham Lustig will restage the ballet.

This conductor plays the music of survival

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

WITH the fiscal crisis, it is obvious that the country's national orchestra needs to tap investors to ensure its survival. And so asked what he would tell investors, new Philippine Philharmonic music director Eugene F. Castillo replied: "I will tell them that investment in the arts has existed since the beginning of time."

Castillo cited the words of Kenney inscribed on the tablets in the face of Kennedy Center, where he worked as conductor for the National Symphony for two years. "After the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, I believe that we too shall be remembered not for our defeats and victories in war or politics but for our contribution to the human spirit."

Castillo added: "So when Philippine Congress allocates something for the CCP and the PPO, they should do so in the firm belief in the power of the arts to immortalize Philippine culture forever."

Two months before the opening of the PPO season, Castillo has been rehearsing the orchestra and trying out new programs.

"It's been fantastic working with the orchestra," he said. "Everyone is willing to learn, we are getting to know each other better and we are having a nice time."

Before Castillo conducted the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra for Cecile Lucad. Castillo was an instant sensation in the all-Ravel orchestral assignment.

"His presence in Manila will make a big difference for the national orchestra," said Lucad. "He is very musical, very precise and yet very innovative and daring. He is one of the most satisfying conductors I have worked with."

Before Castillo and Ruggero Barberi, there was Oscar Yanco, now a German citizen based in Hannover; Francisco Feliciano (now a full-time educator and composer), occasionally Basilio Manalo (founder of Manila Symphony Orchestra II) and Chino Toledo (once with the Cebu Philharmonic).

The PPO was founded by violinist Luis Valencia only in 1973, it is only six years older than the Singapore Symphony.

Before this, the real gem of a Philippine orchestra was the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO); founded in 1932 by an Austrian, Alexander Lippay, and sustained before and after the Japanese Occupation by an-



PHILIPPINE Philharmonic music director Eugene F. Castillo

other Austrian, Herbert Zipper.

But with state subsidy and regular venue given to PPO, the MSO died a natural death in the late '80s. The name was later acquired by a new ensemble of young players trained by Manalo who baptized the group as the MSO II.

Outside Metro Manila, the Cebu Philharmonic Orchestra (later named Peace Philharmonic) was formed. But because of financial problems, most of its members left for better pay at the SMPPO. The MSO II and Peace Philharmonic have become inactive.

Another orchestra, the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, founded by former PPO oboe player Rodel Colmenar, came into the picture with its members coming mainly from school orchestras and retirees from the PPO and MSO.

New blood

In between rehearsals, Castillo is upgrading the PPO website, planning to use the texting craze to improve musical education, and drawing up a PPO chamber series. He is also filling up vacancies with young but proficient string players. "It's very exciting because it's a chance to put new blood into those vacant chairs," he said.

Thus far, only the PPO (which has state subsidy) and San Miguel (which has solid corporate support) are assured of funding.

But the state subsidy for the CCP and its orchestra is running out and the national orchestra needs to tap other sources of funding. The CCP yearly allocation of P200 million has been reduced to P90 million, just enough to cover its operations.

Castillo says there is nothing new about orchestras facing funding problems.

"Any orchestra is faced with that, but I am optimistic," he said. "I think

it was Sir George Solti (conductor of the Chicago Symphony) who remarked that the ideal orchestral situation is living on French money (government support), London audience and the Chicago Symphony. Someday, I'd like to be able to say that the ideal situation in Manila is French money, Manila audience and the Philippine Philharmonic."

The new PPO conductor wants more corporate support of music.

"One important thing to remember," he explained, "is that when a corporation or a firm lends its name in support of a worthy project like sustaining classical music in society or making children's concert available whatever the cost would be, the community will remember those more than the impact of a TV commercial or a print advertisement. For instance, when an Internet company decides to support the chamber series of the PPO and appeal to post-college audiences, they will most likely get clients from that sector. When a bank supports a children concert series or concerts for the disabled, they will remember that bank when their friends and relatives decide to open new accounts."

Told that concert attendance had not been encouraging, Castillo said that he had reached out to various sectors in Sacramento, especially to the young.

How then can a national orchestra attract the funding it deserves?

"The orchestra has to be accessible and should be doing things beyond the walls of the Cultural Center. I have mentioned our plans to perform for medical missions, annual concerts for peace in Mindanao and a chamber series for young college and post-college age. I am also planning ideas for rush hour concerts for those stuck in traffic. They have to experience concerts in a demystified way. I will go ahead to show that the orchestra is not just for the elite. It is for the general public."

So what is in store for Manila's music lovers in the PPO season, which opened Sept. 10?

"You will find something a little bit new, a little bit unfamiliar, a little bit familiar and most of all, our beloved Filipino compositions old and new. If you come for Brahms, you will be excited by the (Angel) Pena. If you come for Benjamin Britten, you might end up falling in love with Moussorgsky. If you come for Beethoven, you might end up with a whole different view of English music and who Sir Michael Tippett was. They can expect to come for one thing and be surprised by the other. You can fall in love with the Brahms symphony all over again and hear Barber's Adagio for Strings in a new light no matter in how many movies you have heard it from."



THE SAN Miguel Master Chorale with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra

Is the Pinoy artist global?

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

ASIAN artists are rising in the international scene. But how fares the Filipino artist? Why is he/she being left behind or, at least, not at the same level as other Asians?

These were the themes and issues panelists and audience (mostly students) grappled with during "Sinig Taktakan," a monthly forum of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, held recently at the Grand Boulevard Hotel.

The resource speakers were National Artist Eddie Romero, the film director; sculptor Jose Tence-Ruiz, choreographer Enrico Labayan, who spent 35 years abroad, Cebu educator Flordeliza Abanto, and Eugene Castillo, incoming music director of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) and a Filipino-American from Sacramento, California.

Moderator Ed Cabagnot, who heads the CCP Film Division, set the tone when he declared that there is a "fantastic revival" in Asian arts, with Korean cinema landing on the covers of Time and Newsweek, and international sales of Asian movies on the upswing. After Avellana and then Brocca, Cabagnot asked, what happened to the Filipino artist?

In the ensuing interaction, a lot of reasons on why Pinoy artists are lagging behind below par surfaced.

For sculptor Tence-Ruiz, it all boils down to excellence and compromise: "We have our own idea of excellence. Working here immediately colors you. We should not compromise too much." He cited colleagues Ramon Ordina and Impy Pilapil for having produced innovative and significant works of international caliber. As for international awards, these tend to be "political" in nature.

Conductor Castillo called attention to the fact that many Filipino musicians have moved abroad and mentioned acclaimed soprano Rachel Gerodias, who is now "auditioning all over Europe." He asked, "Why can't the PPO have artists flocking to it? Why are Filipinos flying away?"

"It's financial," Abanto said. "They don't get the breaks here. Some Filipinos are not ready for a higher form of art, so we have to educate them (the children) at an early age. Art has become avant-garde. The government has to step in."

To this, Tence-Ruiz noted that the government's CCP Outreach Program is "very significant." CCP vice president Nanding Josef

confirmed that there is a very large government network in support of the arts "but kulang pa" (not enough). He called for "karangalan" (honor) in the arts, "self-love and love of others."

A member of the audience observed that there are outstanding Filipino artists who are a success abroad, like pianist Cecile Lucad, tenor Otoniel Gonzaga, and singer Lea Salonga. But, by and large, Filipino artists still lack a "formula" that would make the international community sit up and take notice.

To this, Castillo indicated that Filipino artists lack "fire." He quoted from a favorite poem of Robert Frost: "From what I've tasted of desire, I hold with those who favor fire." And the conductor asked: "Where is the fire (of Filipino artists)?"

Choreographer Labayan lamented the "famine in good art," drew a distinction between art and entertainment: "Art can entertain but entertainment is not art."

Director Romero disagreed. "Art and entertainment do meet. If you influence only one person (through art or entertainment), that's all it needs. That person might be president (someday) I consider myself an entertainer, sometimes not very good. I can only do with what I have."

Warming up to his theses, Romero said "there's a new wave of globalization but globalization has always been around. The only value worth developing is self-reliance, self-respect. We have no shortage of talented people but we have not developed an audience (for films). Government should not just reduce taxes but eliminate all taxes, and pay the penalty. Government feels it is (movies are) entertainment, non-essential."

In the summing up, Labayan said "there is obvious discontent with ourselves. We are victims of racism and that's how they (the US? the advanced countries?) want it." Castillo opined that the forum opened "a can of worms. You feel frustrated, good. To think, explore, to be creative. You (students) have that."

Abanto urged critical thinking so as to correct wrongs, and raise "influence to a better level." Tence-Ruiz counseled patience, so that we will "see ourselves in the process." The achievements of our people (rice terraces) and other peoples (pyramids) should also be studied.

Romero intoned: "Self-evaluation is the beginning of creation."

And hopefully—someday if not soon—all this will make us competitive with the other Asian artists who are now, almost en masse, reaping laurels in the international scene?

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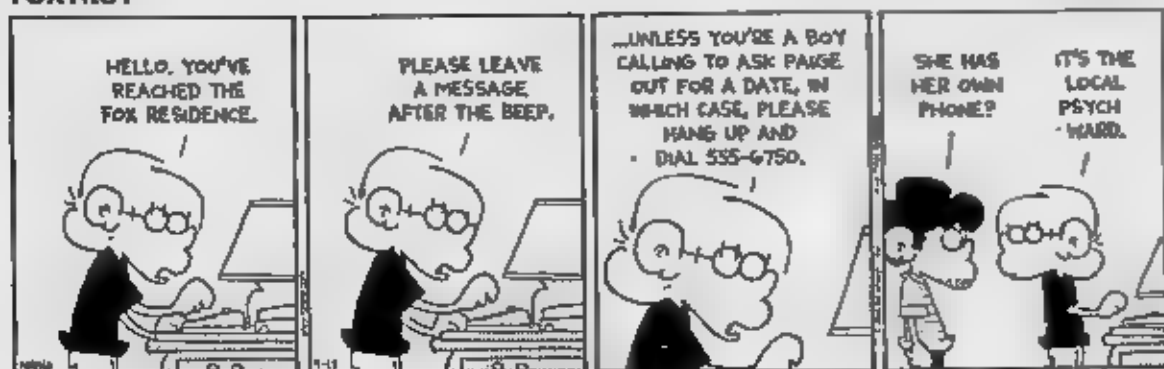
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BY PATRICK McDONNELL



ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're enormously persevering. When you want something, you don't let up until you get it. You have excellent powers of concentration. Because you focus your energy so intensely, it's important to double-check whatever you embrace (physically or ideologically). All kinds of new, fresh, exciting avenues open up for you this year. Birthdate of: Neli Carter, actress; Jean Smart, actress; Roald Dahl, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're excitable and impatient, and you want everything yesterday. Others seem too slow! You'll have to work at being patient with co-workers today. (You can do it.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Love at first sight is definitely possible today. Flirtations from unexpected sources might surprise you. Parents should be vigilant about children who might encounter accident-prone situations today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You might be too blunt in conversations with others, especially parents and family members. What lies underneath this is that you feel rebellious about something. What is it? (You need to know this.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is definitely a mildly accident-prone day. Take extra precautions when driving, cycling and walking. You might also want to think twice before you speak. (Oh, yeah.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might discover surprising ways to make money today. You're also tempted to spend money impulsively and spontaneously. Be cool. Save some for tomorrow.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You can't help thinking or speaking rather hastily today. Your mind is moving in erratic leaps. You need to do something different and unusual to satisfy your jumpy energy.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Unexpected revelations about something could come to you today. It will be a "Eureka!" moment. If so, you can definitely learn something important.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Agreement with friends isn't easy today. You have ideas of your own! Nevertheless, you might meet someone rather fascinating and bizarre today (not your everyday variety).

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Discussions with bosses and authority figures are a bumpy road today. Try to avoid these if you can. You're not in the mood to take instructions or directions from anybody else. (But do you have that luxury?)

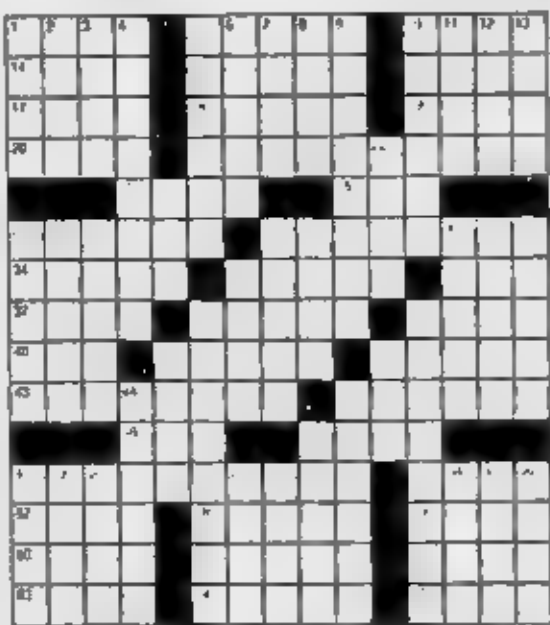
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're attracted to unusual, daring ideas today. It's as if you're suddenly thinking outside the box. This is exciting and certainly educational.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might be surprised by a gift today. Somebody wants to give you something or do a favor for you. You should accept, because by doing so you give someone else the opportunity to practice generosity.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might be tempted to tell someone off today. What's the point? At any rate, you should be prepared to back up your words later, because someone will no doubt challenge you.

DAILY CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Untidy diner
 - Wound marks
 - Melville's whaler
 - Celeb's ride
 - Understood but not stated
 - Vegas rival
 - Beyond
 - Ugaur
 - Flavoring
 - Stoic philosopher of Rome
 - Catcher Tony
 - City in the Black Forest
 - List of charges
 - Gave the ax to
 - City near Rawalpindi
 - Arm of the Barents
 - Alabama city
 - Goes yachting
 - The man in question
 - Razor choice
 - Deadly poisons
 - Kiel or Suez
 - Moon's assistant
 - Strong winds
 - Refuge
 - Comics' gimmicks
 - Carnivorous felines
 - Rockies grazer
 - Mexican money
 - Washington city
 - Family man
 - Coolie guy
 - Quarters
 - JAE word
 - Boxer
 - Benvenuto
 - Inasmuch as
 - Present
 - Young adult
 - Detests
 - Postic tributes
- DOWN**
- Pig vtilas
 - Draw breath
 - Warning sign
 - One of the Society Islands
 - Well-grounded
 - Elche's medium
 - Get up
 - Sign makers' aids
 - Esoteric leader
 - Add to the pot
 - Benefit
 - Dugout slack
 - Vex
 - Encumbrances
 - Mexican empire of old
 - Severe
 - Diminished
 - Goes in a hurry
 - Cut stubble
 - The ...
 - Sanction
 - Grace closings
 - Jones of bacteriology
 - Altermath
 - American
 - Samoa capital
 - River to the Colorado
 - Short greetings
 - Scorpion's slinger
 - Pokes fun at
 - Come in second
 - Destitution
 - Friend in France
 - "The ... Ranger"
 - Operatic tune
 - Fast time
 - Like the Kalahari
 - Lay asphalt
 - Fortis and Lincoln



By Frances Burton
Suttonville, GA

9/13/04



Saturday's Puzzle Solved

9/13/04

In Makati, a new home for theater

By Gibbs Cadiz

NOT many people may know about it, but once upon a time Makati had a premier performance venue that was as modern for its time as the stages at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and had the historical and artistic cache to match them.

Built in 1968, the Mother Rose Auditorium at Assumption College in San Lorenzo Village, Makati, was designed by National Artist Pablo Antonio. Despite not being air-conditioned, it was renowned for its acoustics and was the only auditorium in Makati equipped with a flying scenery mechanism for its stage productions.

The auditorium was the venue for countless plays, musical productions, reunion programs, recitals and graduations—which is saying much, considering that Assumption's illustrious alumnae include such vanguards of Philippine art and culture as filmmakers Marilou Diaz-Abaya and Ramona Diaz ("Imelda"); painter Aida Cue; ballerinas Maritoni Rufino and Sofia Zobel; pianists Leonor Kilayko and Nena Del Rosario-Villanueva, former Peta artistic director Maribel Legarda, singers Joey Albert and Pinky Valdez (who recently released a CD of inspirational songs called "Sandalwood"), and noted stage actor-director Ana Valdes-Lim.

Not to mention former senator Loren Legarda and President Macapagal Arroyo herself, as well as society icons such as Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Judy Araneta Roxas, who currently chairs the school's alumnae association.

Wear and tear

Thirty-five years is a long time for a theater to survive, and in the case of a workaday school facility like Mother Rose, that meant making do while the harsh tropical climate and regular use by students and parents year in and year out steadily wore it down.

"It was still functional, but not comfortable anymore," says Sr. Josefina Magat, RA (Religious of the Assumption), president of the school. "The wooden flooring was ant-infested, and eventually it wasn't conducive anymore even for masses."

Its deterioration inconvenienced several alumnae so much during a recent reunion that a project has been launched to renovate Mother Rose Hall and bring it to 21st-century conditions. Even better, the new hall will become home to a new theater organization called Meta (Marie Eugenie Theater of the Assumption), to be run by Valdes-Lim.

"It will be like Dulaang UP," Valdes-Lim explains, "a student-based theater group but also using professional actors. Our goal is to come up with productions that would raise the consciousness of our girls, first of all, and the public in general."

Conventional wisdom has it that the typical Assumptionista is sheltered, lady-like and dainty—but also, given her typically well-off pedigree, *soyal* and flighty. The school is often seen as a high-end finishing school for girls of the elite.

Sister Josefina, who comes from an activist congregation that emphasizes exposure to and involvement in social flux ("We are an outgoing congregation. We don't have grills. We were almost not approved by the Pope," she says, laughing), thinks that enduring rep is belied by the number of Assumption alumnae who have made their mark as committed artists, professionals and leaders in society.

Where, after all, would they find that spark except in the fertile environment of their formative years?

Thus, new generations of young Assumptionistas assure that the school has its formative work cut out for it. And if Sister Josefina and Valdes-Lim will have their way, theater will be a crucial plank of that mission.

"It will hopefully complete the education of our students by providing them a more holistic experience," explains Sister Josefina. "Our girls are so sheltered and protect-



THE NEW hall under construction, designed by Rene Jasareno, and future home of the Mother Eugenie Theater of the Assumption



THE OLD Mother Rose auditorium at Assumption College Makati, designed by National Artist Pablo Antonio



ANA Valdes-Lim

Assumption alumnae are raising money to put up a new campus venue for the arts

ed, but we have to address issues of today and make them more passionate and socially aware. Theater can be a springboard for exploring these issues, and other disciplines in the campus can then just pick them up."

Treacy theater

No, Valdes-Lim adds, it's not going to be treacy religious theater meant only to make *manangs* out of impressionable young girls.

"The challenge for us is to choose the right material. We will do both classics and modern works, but preferably those that would address issues of today, such as inclusivity, women's rights, gender tolerance. I'm hoping the theater arts will cultivate that kind of sensitivity," she says.

The cosmopolitan Valdes-Lim is perhaps the best person to helm this fledgling theater group. A graduate of the famed Juilliard School in New York (its products include Robin Williams, Kevin Spacey, William Hurt and Kevin Kline), she has had extensive acting and directing credits overseas, is a popular acting teacher with some

well-received CCP productions under her belt ("Middle of Silence," "Dracula"), and has been chosen one of 100 outstanding alumni in Juilliard's centennial commemorative magazine.

"With Ana around, Meta would be a very good vehicle to develop our young talents while remaining true to our Assumption values," says Sister Josefina.

Meta's first production, now in the planning stage, is a musical about Mother Marie Eugenie Milleret de Breu, the progressive RA founder and a candidate for canonization. The original music will be commissioned, with the show going up in the new auditorium that's now rising on the rubble of the old one.

Assumption's alumnae association is spearheading the construction to the tune of P36 million, with about P11.7 million pitched in by the school. The rest is being raised through sponsorships (seats in the 1,600-seater auditorium are being "sold" at P20,000 each) and donations. Valdes-Lim is happy to note that all front and aisle seats have been sold out.

By the end of the year, the new theater designed by Rene Jasareno (who also designed the 2,000-seater Assumption Antipolo auditorium) will be operational. It will provide not only a ready venue for student-faculty activities, but more importantly, will be rented out as a new, intimate and thoroughly modern performance destination in the heart of the Makati area.

Its greatest role, nonetheless, is clear-cut: to provide young Assumption girls the platform to explore the worlds of art and ideas and, perhaps in the process, discover themselves.

"Even if our students don't end up as famous artists, as many of them have, what's more important is they interiorize their education through theater," says Sister Josefina. "If they can say, 'I've become more self-aware, I've become a better person' because of the issues we raise, then we've done our part. We can then help them make good choices."

Or, as Valdes-Lim puts it, "We just do what we have to do, and hopefully the product will speak for itself."

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

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Madz carries on winning tradition under new master

Mark Anthony A. Carpio has confirmed his capability to maintain the group's reputation for great choral singing



THE PHILIPPINE Madrigal Singers after winning both in the polyphony and habanera categories at the 50th Certamen Internacional de Habanera y Polifonia in Spain

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

STAGING a homecoming concert after winning in an international choral competition has become a tradition for the Philippine Madrigal Singers.

Although with the numerous top prizes it has won for the past years, capped by the Grand Prix in the European Choral Competition in 1997, it's bringing home the bacon, so to speak, after an international choral competition has become almost a matter of course.

Recently, at the 50th Certamen Internacional de Habanera y Polifonia, an international choral tilt in Torrevieja, Spain, the Madz bested some 22 participants to win first prizes in both the "Habanera" and "Polyphonic" categories. The prizes are the first the group won after its 1997 win in the most prestigious choral competition, which prohibited it from joining an international choral contest

in the next five years.

New steward

For new choirmaster Mark Anthony A. Carpio, to whom National Artist Maestra Andrea O. Veneracion, venerable founder and choirmaster of the Madz, entrusted the stewardship of the group, the victory in Spain confirmed his capability to continue the Madz's tradition of great choral singing.

At the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Carpio sat recently on the leftmost chair of the magical semi-circle and led the Madz in displaying its winning form before an appreciative audience that had grown through the years.

In Carpio's hands, the group's choral excellence remains untarnished. It continues to glow, touching the hearts of listeners and momentarily lifting their spirits in the face of today's mounting hardship.

Needless to say, the centerpieces of the program were the three *habanera* pieces. "A Tu Lado," "Niña Merse," and "Tu,"—composition and lyrics by Javier Justo/Matias Anton Mena, Federico Morena Torroba/Manuel Tamayo, and E. Sanchez Fuentes/Fernan Sanchez, respectively. They were arranged by Manuel Massotti Littel.

The pieces were rendered handsomely, in utmost legate manner with a pronounced graceful pulsation, notwithstanding the surging notes in the high register of one of the songs. The undulation throbbed suavely, not as pointedly bouncy as our *habanera*, a Latin American form we acquired from mother Spain.

Beating the 'inventors'

Curiously, the Madz defeated a choir from Cuba where the *habanera* originated (it was named after Havana, the capital, famous for its cigars). It has definitely become part of the Madz tradition of great singing to beat the choir of the country where a contest piece originates.

Madz, of course, has bested several choirs from Europe where choral singing originated (the form was vaguely known in the Philippines before colonial times).

It takes a high-caliber choir to interpret Francisco Feliciano's contemporary ethnic piece, "Pamugan," that was part of Madz's program in the competition. Needless to say, virtuosity is another aspect of the Madz greatness.

As the new choirmaster of the Madz, Carpio has his work cut out for him keeping the group's reputation unblemished. But there is no doubting his ability to maintain the Madz's hallmark of excellence that his mentor, Maestra Veneracion, had established during her directorship.

Improvements needed

Some details still need polishing, such as voicing or blending of individual and sectional voices to ensure an impeccable sense of tonal balancing. Mention must also be made of intonation, which occasionally gets out of bounds.

The members' soloist caliber also has to be honed through the combined effort of the singers and their choirmaster. In the past, the Madz was known for the sterling caliber of its soloists. There is no doubt that, in time, the present crop of Madz choristers will also achieve this.

On the whole, one is heartened to note that Carpio has ably kept the sensibility that is overwhelmingly Madz in essence. It is certain he will keep the Madz's tradition of excellent choral singing alive.

Meanwhile, Jonathan Velasco, another titan in choral music, has earned the esteem of choristers at the recent 5th Taipei International Choral Festival. A former Madz member who now conducts the Ateneo Chamber Singers, Velasco served in the faculty of the festival.

Velasco was featured in an issue of the Taiwan News. He rehearsed the Festival Choir for Ryan Cayabyab's "Te Deum" and Leonard Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms."

Velasco was also a member of the jury in the recent World Choral Olympics in Bremen, Germany. He has been invited to be in the jury of a forthcoming international choral competition in Marktoberdorf, Germany, where the Madz won first prize in 1989. Velasco, who teaches at the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music, will also sit in the jury of the International Brahms Competition in Wernigerode, Germany.

Soprano Alegria Ferrer and tenor Jonathan Badon bagged this year's Ateneo Awards for Best Classical Performer in the female and male categories, respectively.



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'Troyanas,' Tanghalang Pilipino's Filipino adaptation of Euripides' 'Trojan Women,' sets the record straight about the war's aftermath

AFTER the fall of Rome, the women are rounded up

War of the widows

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

FORGET the feel-good ending of that Hollywood blockbuster "Troy," which saw the escape from the burning city of doomed lovers Paris and Helen, princess Andromache and her infant, and other survivors.

As some critics who had panned the movie put it, the Greek playwrights who had made classics out of the fates of the conquerors and losers alike would have turned in their graves, crying sacrilege over the destruction of their visions and violation of copyright.

"Troyanas," Tanghalang Pilipino's (TP) Filipino adaptation of Euripides' "Trojan Women," will at least set the record right. All the men of the once glorious walled city were slaughtered. Nobody, except for Aeneas and his aged father, made it out to one day build Rome.

Helen (Kalila Aguilos), who triggered the 10-year war, is reunited with her husband Menelaus (Richard Cunanan). The Trojan princesses, including the lovely, noble Andromache (Shamaine Centenera-Buenacina), are handed out as concubines to the lusty Greek generals. Hector's 7-year-old son, Astyanax, is hurled screaming to his death from Troy's highest towers.

Imperious queen

The focal point of this tragedy is the one character the movie conveniently left out: the imperious Trojan queen Hecuba (Madeleine Nicolas alternating with Divina Cavestany)—bloody yet unbowed, never losing her dignity and majesty despite the tumult around her.

"Hecuba was an intelligent woman who counsels and strategizes. You must remember that her husband Priam was a strong king and Troy was a prosperous [nation-state] for a long time," Cavestany describes her character. "[If it is true] that the mother lives in her children, she raised a hero, Hector, and a prophetess, Cassandra."

The play opens with all the women huddled in a barbed concentration camp, the evening gowns they had been wearing the night before in celebration of the apparent departure of the Greek army now in tatters. Hecuba, despite seeing the genocide of her people and the murder of her family, remains clear-headed and calm, mustering strength to provide a tenuous thread of hope for the surviving women.

"It is the mother who advises the daughter-in-law, Andromache, to forget the dead son, and her [own child], Cassandra, to make her master Menelaus fall in love with her. When the storm is too strong, you flow with the sorrow, rather than be swallowed by the waves," says Cavestany.

The one thing that finally breaks down Hecuba's steely calm is the execution of her grandson, whom she had envisioned as a future avenger who would restore Troy's lost glory. However, while the traditional Euripides play has a grieving Hecuba leading out her sheep in resignation, director Josefina Estrella converts what would have been a final blow into a seething rage that galvanizes the audience with its anti-war message.

Estrella explains, "In the classical version, she wanted to die and run to the flames, but is stopped [by the soldiers]. [Our ending is] more revolutionary and palaban."

The director departs a lot from the traditional interpretation, which has the protagonists endlessly weeping. "Woe is me, why did the gods allow this? It's really boring. These [characters] are

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5 "Kids Fun Day" Fun & games featuring Drum & Lyre Exhibition, Games & Mascots Parade 2pm	5 "Holiday Melodies" A Drum & Lyre Exhibition of Christmas Carols by Bull Cavaliers	4 Star Idol Semi-Finals 4pm, 2nd Level, Activity Hub
10 "Stone Art Exhibit" by Kim, Ki Chul World Tour by International Youth Fellowship of Korea In celebration of Philippine-Korean Friendship Week 3rd Level, Starplus Function Hall	11 HANOG NG SMART SA PAMILYANG PILIPINO with Chynna Orialeza, Brad Turvey, Nadine Samonte & Tyrone Perez Hosted by Dang/Roxanne Cruz 10am, 4th Level, Tradehall	4-30 "Painting Expressions" Grand Exhibit of Las Piñas Artist Society 2nd Level, Activity Hub
12 GRANDPARENTS' DAY "Star si Lolo at Lola Duol Singing Competition" 4pm, 2nd level, Tradehall	12 GRANDPARENTS' DAY Starland Search for "2004 Idol Ko si Lolo at Lola" Starland Themepark & Resort 4th Level	7-13 FIGARO'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY BASH Nights of Enchanting Music Soothing Sax Strings of Four Classical Strums 10 Modern Acoustic Jam 11 a-CAFE-lla Lounge Music 12 Figaro Night
14-18 "FOR THE LOVE OF BEAUTY" Hair & Beauty Expo 14 Hair Cutting Demo Haircut Price-Off FREE HAIRCUT TO FIRST 100 grandparents (First-come, first-served) 1pm-7pm 15 Hair Coloring & Rebonding Demo 16 FREE Make-over (Make-up Demonstration) 17 FREE Skin Analysis 18 Fashion Show by Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association of the Philippines (HACAP) 6pm, 2nd Level, Tradehall	17 Ethel Booba & Kaye Brosas in "RATED BOOBA" 4pm, 4th Level, Tradehall	12 GRANDPARENTS' DAY "Grandparents' Day-Out Variety Show" 4pm, 2nd Level, Activity Hub
25 WORKING OUT with JACKIE LOU BLANCO 4pm, 2nd Level, Tradehall	18 STAR IDOL GRAND FINALS 5pm, 4th Level, Tradehall	21-26 A FAIR TO REMEMBER by Vision & Foresight Beauty and Wellness Week 10am-8pm, 2nd Level, Activity Hub
Wednesdays & Fridays Cool Acoustics 7 pm, 3rd Level, Bridgeway	Starland Special Dog Show & Best in Animal Costume Contest Starland Themepark & Resort 4th Level	Mondays & Tuesdays Dancio's Month-long Anniversary Blowout
	24-26 "ALL ABOUT HER" Beauty Fair 2004 4th Level, Tradehall	

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Learning the 'abakada' becomes a fun game

"Alphabet Alphabeto"

Written and illustrated by Tracy David
Adarna House, 2004

By Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz
Contributor

YOUNG Paris-based Filipino graphic designer and art director Tracy del Rosario David was not just on her usual balikbayan visit in June last year.

She was obsessed with her idea of an extraordinary alphabet book, which she had been working on after office hours for close to a year. She was going to present the dummy to children's publishing houses in Manila.

David was not only searching for her dream publisher but also needed input on her unconventional bilingual approach to the alphabet. She wanted an English-Filipino alphabet book that would present images and objects with names beginning with the same letter.

A year later, we have an avant-garde alphabet book that teases

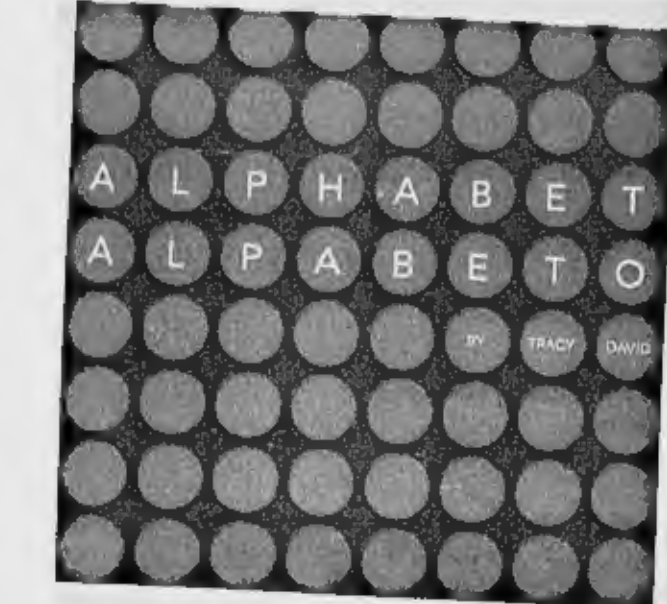
from A to Z. As David herself warns in her introduction, it is a word guessing game for children and adults. It includes all the 26 letters of the English alphabet that are also in the new Filipino alphabet plus the two extra letters in the latter—ng and the Spanish ñ.

From 'abakada' to 'alphabeto'

The curious and the uninitiated may wonder when and how the new Filipino alphabet was transformed to correspond to the English alphabet.

National Artist for Literature Virgilio Almarino, aka Adarna House founder and Filipino scholar, explains that the evolution of the *abakada* to the *alphabeto* has nothing to do with the English alphabet, but its being more representative of Philippine languages. The letters not in the old *abakada* such as c, j, f are found in certain languages.

There is nothing predictable about the alphabet book. Considering how much we have com-



plained about the "dumbing down" of reading materials for children, this is a welcome and refreshing change. It challenges, intrigues, fascinates both young and old.

The book will be a sure success. The game is not easy to play and, thoughtfully, a glossary at the end of the book provides the

answers. But not all the answers, because David encourages the readers to look for other words on pages she deliberately does not identify, but are there awaiting discovery.

Fun and appealing

It is wonderful that the Philippines has a book that is as much

fun and as visually appealing as some of today's popular "game" books from the West. There is Scholastic Books' "I Spy" series, which requires readers to identify objects on a helter-skelter spread. George Shannon's "Tomorrow's Alphabet" is a deliberately confusing alphabet. For the letter E for instance, it says, "Today's fire, Tomorrow's... embers."

Every page of David's book is in full color. The graphics, computer-generated images, reveal inspiration from and influence of classical and contemporary art, from Matisse to Warhol to today's graphic design icons as Paul Rand and Takashi Murakami.

A visual treat and especially fascinating is the way the letters present themselves—C hangs like a noodle on a chopstick, E is seen on an elephant's trunk, Y is on the face of a spread of yo-yos. Even the font style is in keeping with the object it represents.

Some adults may raise their eyebrows over the use of words not in the usual realm of a child's experience, like wasabi for W or

jalapeño for Ñ, etc.—but isn't the point of a word book to challenge and introduce the unfamiliar, to increase limited vocabularies?

The book with a launch price of P300 is expensive but it is a deluxe edition—hard cover, thick-coated paper, full color and pages stitched, not stapled or glued. Production cost was high so David had her banker father, Rey David, as special sponsor. As someone observed, if Adarna had solely spent for it, "Alphabet Alphabeto" would have exhausted the publishing house's budget for the year and then some.

Tracy David had to find a way to have her dream book come true. And it is a book which reflects how her talent has been nurtured in New York, Manila and Paris.

The book is available at Mag:Net bookstore-gallery at EJI Center, ABS-CBN, Queson City and Paseo de Roxas and Sedeno St., Makati City.

E-mail the author at nenisrc@hotmail.com

Laguna power firm helps spread the Education Revolution

By Andy Saracho
Contributor

FOR many of the teachers, it was just one of the seminars the Department of Education usually required them to attend in preparation for additional workload to be given them in the future.

But they were attending the Mentoring the Mentors Program (MMP). Held for four days at the NPC Camarin Guesthouse in Barangay West Talaogan, Cavinti, the MMP gathered 34 principals, master teachers and teachers from 23 public elementary schools in Laguna for what had been expected to spark a new beginning—the beginning of a revolution, the "Education Revolution."

By the last day, the new "revolutionaries" had been armed with new knowledge, skills and techniques—ready to go to the battlefield to help win the long-fought battle against poverty.

As it were, the MMP participants heeded the call to develop a "social optic," a social transformation that begins with oneself, called *Kambio sa Pananaw*. It was a shift of perspectives from an "akin" (mine) to an "atin" (ours) mentality. They committed to spread the revolution as soon as they go back to their own schools and communities.

CBK Power Company Ltd., a hydroelectric power producer based in Kalayaan, Laguna, and its revolutionary partner, the Foundation for Worldwide People Power Inc. (FWWPP), sponsored and organized the training program as a follow-through to the MMP and Adopt-A-School Program that started last year with the local public high schools.

Public education support is actually part of CBK Power's corporate social responsibility through its social development program. Under this, the company now has 41 college scholars, 10 of them in their junior year in different colleges and universities in Laguna, Quezon and Metro Manila.

Participants to the MMP came from five towns surrounding CBK Power's plants and facilities: Kalayaan, Lumban, Cavinti, Majayjay and Luisiana.

The participating schools were: San Juan Elementary School, Langos ES, Sitio Magalolon ES and San Antonio ES (in Kalayaan); Lumban Central, Wawa ES and Caliraya-Lewin ES (all in Lumban); Bulajo Layug ES, Buro ES, Talaogan West ES, Bukal ES, Talaogan East ES and Inao-awan ES (all in Cavinti); Majayjay ES and Bakia-Borocan ES (in Majayjay); and Luisiana ES, San Rafael-San Roque ES, Bonifacio ES, San Antonio ES, San Buenaventura ES, San Isidro ES, San Salvador ES and Dela Paz-San Pablo ES (all in Luisiana).

With the blessings from DepEd's Laguna Schools Division Office under superintendent Lilia T. Reyes, the participants actively participated in the MMP that turned out to be "different" from what they had expected.

Big difference

The "big difference" was delivered by the effective and convincing lectures by three charismatic ladies from FWPP.

Evelyn Mejillano, the national coordinator of FWPP's Mentoring the Mentors Program, provided a bird's eye view of "mentoring."

Stella "Chinit" Rufino, MMP's program director, hit the nail on the head by calling on the participants for a shift in perspective (*Kambio sa Pananaw*) toward an "atin mentality" as the crucial starting point in the mentoring process.

"To imbibe the *atin* mentality is to take care of the last, the least and the lost. To win, to strive for excellence, but to extend a helping hand to those who are left behind. Armed with this new perspective, you will be ready to influence your co-teachers to mentor their students to become better citizens who care about their community and their nation."

Speaking on "Leadership for Service," Rufino reminded participants that "the call for an Education Revolution is a call for change in the way we educate the young. It is a call to make learning go beyond the exercise of imparting and acquiring knowledge. It is a call to develop them into leaders who can think critically, initiate change and stand for their convictions."

Another charismatic lady, Lirio Ongpin Mapa, vice president of



CHINIT Rufino, Mentoring the Mentors program director.

the Center for Leadership and Change Inc., spoke on Stephen Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" and Chiara Lubich's "art of loving" in her lecture on "Building Win-Win Relationships," a module that guides the participants, as mentors, through the process of "investing" in relationships.

Grace Reyes, a young instructor in UP Diliman, provided support to her "senior" colleagues by explaining Celia Adriano's "Designing Effective Instructions" and conducting the energizers.

In the graduation, which FWPP's president, Maria Lim Ayuyao, honored with her presence, participants lighted candles to signify their intention to "spread the revolution" as they recited their commitment to upgrade the quality of education in their respective communities as "better mentors."

The commitments by the participants are a sign that the four-day MMP somehow sparked a flame that could spread around and light the path toward a brighter future for the country's education sector.

Lin Castro, CBK Power's vice president for environment and community relations, reaffirmed the company's commitment in supporting efforts to upgrade the quality of education as a long-term solution to poverty in the power firm's host communities. She raised hopes that CBK Power's efforts will help "realize a common vision of a better Laguna, a better Philippines to live in."

US-based nurses honor FEU official

DEAN Lydia A. Palaypay, vice president for academic affairs of the Far Eastern University and former dean of the FEU Institute of Nursing, was honored with a tribute last July 30 by the FEU Nursing Alumni Association Foundation, composed of alumni now based in the United States.

The tribute was held during the group's 11th annual biennial reunion at the Marriot Mar-

quis Hotel on Broadway in New York City.

Palaypay, former vice president for special projects of FEU, is the first Filipino member of the board of trustees of the Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Reproductive Health based in the US.

Formerly chair of the Technical Panel for Nursing Education of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, and co-chair of the Technical Panel for Health Professions of the Commission on Higher Education, Palaypay served as chair of the Department of Nursing

Education and Committee on Scholarships and Awards of the Philippine Nursing Association.

Palaypay took up nursing at the University of the Philippines and Boston University and Master in Nursing at the Catholic University of America. She had been adviser for workers in the Philippine delegation on the International Labor Conference in Geneva and vice president of the Association of Deans of Philippine Nursing Colleges, which revised the curriculum to make it more competency-based and community-oriented.

Book on campus spirituality out

MAGIS, Writings on Faith, Joy, & Love, edited by Queena N. Lee-Chua, is a collection of writings on personal experiences of individuals who are part of the Ateneo community. In moments of sadness or joy, of loss or fulfillment, of desperation or exhilaration, the soul that searches for excellence shines through. Integral to this quest is not only the defining experience, but more so the reflection that comes after it. "Magis" will tug at your heart, comfort you, and inspire you.

The collection includes memorable pieces such as the valedictory address of Roselle Ambubuyog, the address of Bienvenido R. Nebres, SJ at the Palanca Awards; reflections on teaching by Danton Remoto, Rene Carvajal, and Queena Lee-Chua; on

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joy ✱

& love ♥

editor, Queena N. Lee-Chua

writing by Krip Yuson and Larry Ypil, on parenting by Maribel Dionisio. Other authors include

Carmelo Caluag II, SJ, Johnny Sy, SJ, Cathy Babao-Guballa, Ruel de Vera, and many more.

Chua is an associate professor of mathematics and psychology at the Ateneo. She writes for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine Journal of Education and Working Mom magazine. She's the author of the "Blessings" series, the "Straight Talk" series, "Why be Afraid of Math," "Ten Outstanding Filipino Scientists," and "In the Beginning and Other Scientific Journeys."

The book is available at the Office of Research and Publications, Ateneo de Manila University and Popular Bookstore on Timog Ave. Call 4265663 or 4266001 local 5180 to 5184, or e-mail orp@admu.edu.ph

War of the widows

From page D1

strong women, not just waiting (ones). The text really gave the actors something to work on."

Contemporary approach

Estrella is using Charles Mee's critically acclaimed modern-day adaptation of Euripides' original text. Translated into Filipino by J.B. Capino, Mee's contemporary approach takes the audience into the heart of a war they can understand, where history is retold by global news agencies and where privileged families protect themselves from the rabble in plush country estates.

Instead of the usual Greek chorus narrating the events in somber staccato, bystanders spread the word in panicky gossip, like witnesses caught by live news cameras. "I was there when the Trojan horse opened..." "Then the Greeks started coming down and set the city on fire..." "Did you see how Priam died?"

The survivors' monologues reflect Hecuba's inner strength and devastating loss, yet are couched in realistic day-to-day longings that connect with today's audiences.

Estrella enumerates the play's final moments: "Andromache remembers that, during her marriage to Hector, the only thing she could think of was her dying—not knowing that this is how her life will end."

Polyxena, Hecuba's teenage and youngest daughter, who willingly offers herself as a sacrifice on the grave of the late Greek warrior Achilles, admits that she "wants to live long" enough to figure out the mysteries of fickle suitors.

Cassandra (Tess Jamias alternating with Diana Malahay) goes to her slavery defiantly, knowing through her gift of prophecy that she will one day kill the Greek ruler Agamemnon to the ruin of his entire family. "She will still fight for Troy, and [her death] will at least bring down one house."

Estrella is careful to preserve the myth of Helen, the catalyst instrumental to the city's siege and destruction. "Helen speaks in French and English because she's a foreigner. Everyone hates her. She's often portrayed as the bitch, and the beauty that launched a

thousand ships. The Mee text [shows] Helen as a vamp who used her beauty; she can't help it. But she's not dumb and is beyond the common."

Yet, Helen, who points to the influence of the Greek goddesses as her excuse, is not spared her day in court by the fiery former queen Hecuba.

As Cavestany describes the confrontation, "Their relationship is not a simple one. Hecuba did feel that her son Paris loved Helen and thus supported her when she joined him in Troy. [But after the war,] Hecuba wants Helen dead, regardless of whatever closeness they had shared. Their confrontation is like a court scene where Hecuba refutes point by point Helen's self-defense."

Hecuba's arguments may linger long after Helen leaves the scene. So will the images of once proud women, which the director calls the "usual debris of war," defiantly marching off to meet their final fates.

Tanghalang Pilipino's "Trojanas" runs until Sept. 26 at the CCR Call 8323661.



SOME of the principals and master teachers from 23 elementary schools in Laguna at the NPC Camarin Guest House, venue of their Mentoring the Mentors sessions.



THE ELAMS Voice Ensemble

CEU concert pays tribute to music deans

THE CENTRO Escolar University Alumni Foundation Inc. pays tribute to Filipino composers, who were pillars of the CEU Conservatory of Music, in "Pagpupugay Sa Mga Maestro ng Centro Escolar," to be held at the GSIS Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City, on Sept. 18 at 5 p.m.

To be honored are great Filipino composers Alfredo Buenaventura, Francisco Buenacampo Sr., Felipe Padilla de Leon, Antonio J. Molina, Lucino T. Sacramento and Lucio San Pedro.

Soprano Camille Lopez-Molipa, tenor Pablo Molina and flutist Dr. Santiago Yangco will interpret origi-

nal works and arrangements of the masters, together with the Elams Voice Ensemble.

At the helm of the project is Dr. Paz I. Lucido, dean of the CEU School of Education, Liberal Arts, Music and Social Work, and president of the CEU Alumni Foundation Inc., and Dr. Myrna A. Lopez, Elams Alumni Chapter president, who also serves as assisting pianist for the program.

Call Erlinda Punzalan Pajardo at the Selams Office, Centro Escolar University, Mendiola Street, Manila, at 7359662 and 7356861 local 223 or 247.

New Tagalog romance titles

BOOKWARE Publishing Corp. has released the newest My Special Valentine titles: "Sana Kahit Minsan," "A Woman's Touch," "Trust Me," "Substitute Husband," "Please Be Careful with My Heart," "Surrender in Paradise," "To Love Again," "Blue Moon," "Give Me Back my

Heart," "A Love to Last Forever," "Labis Kitang Minamahal" and "Hintayin Kong Ibigin Kita."

The company's Nokia 3650 raffle promo will have its grand draw this month. The most recent monthly winner is Marlina Aranzado of Batangas City. Call 6318894.

Book of poetic revision and recreation

WRITING courses talk of writing as a process composed of several stages or steps. To most writers, the most difficult stage may not be creation itself but revision. Successful revision may actually determine a successful piece or—as with "Pidgin Levitations," the latest book of poems by Ricardo de Ungria—an exemplary collection.

"Pidgin Levitations" is a remarkable work of revision and recreation of De Ungria's uncollected poems from 1981-1989. It illustrates a poet's exemplary course from an aesthetics of "esoteric allusions... and mystifying

subtleties and obscurities" (Gémino Abad) to a poetics of ordinary language and subjects: "English at ground level, English at its most conversational."

But the content is not Pidgin Levitations' only admirable feature. The whimsical cover alone is a wealth of visual stimuli. In between the book's pages are envelopes, pictures and postcards that will make you love the book not only for what you read, but also for the nonstop surprises you'll find inside.

Ricardo de Ungria is founding member of the Philippine Literary Arts Council, the Davao Writ-

ers Guild and the Samahan ng mga Guro ng Panitikan sa Dabaw. He has six books of poetry to his name and has edited a number of literary anthologies. He has won the prestigious National Book Award given by the Manila Critics Circle a number of times. At present, he is the chancellor at the University of the Philippines in Mindanao.

"Pidgin Levitations" is of incalculable value for teachers and students of poetry, literary critics, writers and all who have poetry's interest at heart.

The book is available at the UP Press Bookstore, National Book-



store, PowerBooks, Fully Booked in Power Plant Mall, Aeon Books in Loyola Heights and Popular Bookstore in Morato. The book costs P650.

New reads for September

FROM the best-selling author of "Red Azalea" comes "Becoming Madame Mao," by Anchee Min, an extraordinary novel about Madame Mao Zedong, the woman almost universally known as the "white-boned demon," whom many hold directly responsible for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution.

Carson McCullers was only 23 when she published her first novel, "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter," which made her an overnight literary sensation. Available now for the first time in trade paperback, "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter" tells an unforgettable tale of moral isolation in a small southern mill town in the 1930s.

"It's Not About the Bike," by Lance Armstrong, is a biography of one of the most unforgettable characters in the sports world. Meanwhile, "Same As It Never

Was," by Claire Scovell Lazebnik is an engaging, funny and far-from-ordinary debut novel.

Based on their work with more than 300 organizations spanning over a dozen years, "Strategy Maps," by Robert Kaplan and David Norton has created a new management tool: strategy maps. Using dozens of vivid company examples, the book shows how to create customized strategy maps that provides the blueprint for describing, measuring and aligning intangible assets for superior performance.

"Testosterone Inc.: Tales of CEOs Gone Wild," by Christopher Byron tells the story of a group of corporate titans—Jack Welch of GE, Dennis Kozlowski of Tyco, Ron Perelman of Revlon and Al Dunlap of Sunbeam—during a time when all stock prices rose and all business leaders were

heroes—until they became drunk on power and addicted to fame.

"Not From Aconis," by Caspian Woods, is packed with practical wisdom and tips from countless entrepreneurs who have been there and done it.

In "Chronicle of a Death Foretold," by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a man returns to the town where a baffling murder took place 27 years earlier, determined to get to the bottom of the story.

The term "cyberspace" was first coined in 1984 by sci-fi writer William Gibson. In "Cyberspace: the World of Digital Architecture," a largely visual statement of the construct is provided, thus helping advance its legitimacy even further through the featured work and words of many of its pioneers.

Candy giants Milton Hershey and Forrest Mars built business



empires out of one of the world's most magical substances: chocolate. In "The Emperors of Chocolate," by Joel Glenn Brenner, the author spins a unique story that takes us inside a world as mysterious as Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory.

These books are available at: PowerBooks Specialty Store at Greenbelt 4 (7576428/29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang (8505662 to 63) and Glorietta (7527075).

Danton Remoto's new book off the press

PRIZE-WINNING poet, essayist and fiction writer Danton Remoto has just published his newest book, "Buhay Bading." The book is a translation into Filipino of selected essays from his earlier books, "Seduction & Solitude" and "X-Factor: Tales Outside the Closet." In a witty and engaging Filipino laced with

gayspeak, Remoto brings to life the issues and controversies that revolve around the Filipino gay male identity in the country.

There are two dates for the book launching. The first will be Sept. 17, Friday, 6 p.m., at PowerBooks Megamall. The second will be on Oct. 2, Saturday, 7:30 p.m., at

PowerBooks Greenbelt 4. The book is now available in the Philippine literature and psychology sections of National Bookstore and PowerBooks.

There will be a short program, food and drinks, and book-signing sessions not only of the new book but also of Remoto's earlier books:

"Ladlad: An Anthology of Philippine Gay Writing," "Ladlad 2" and others. The author has won awards and grants from the British Council, Fulbright, Asian Scholarship Foundation, Cultural Center Awards in Literature and Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards in Literature.

JOIN... BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES 2005

November 5-7, 2004 • Philippine Trade Training Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City

...a 4-in-1 event for businessmen, investors, foreign buyers, would-be entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, consultants and members of the academe and students featuring:

Business Opportunity Forum

November 5, 2004 (8:00am - 5:00pm)

With the theme **Business Partnering:**

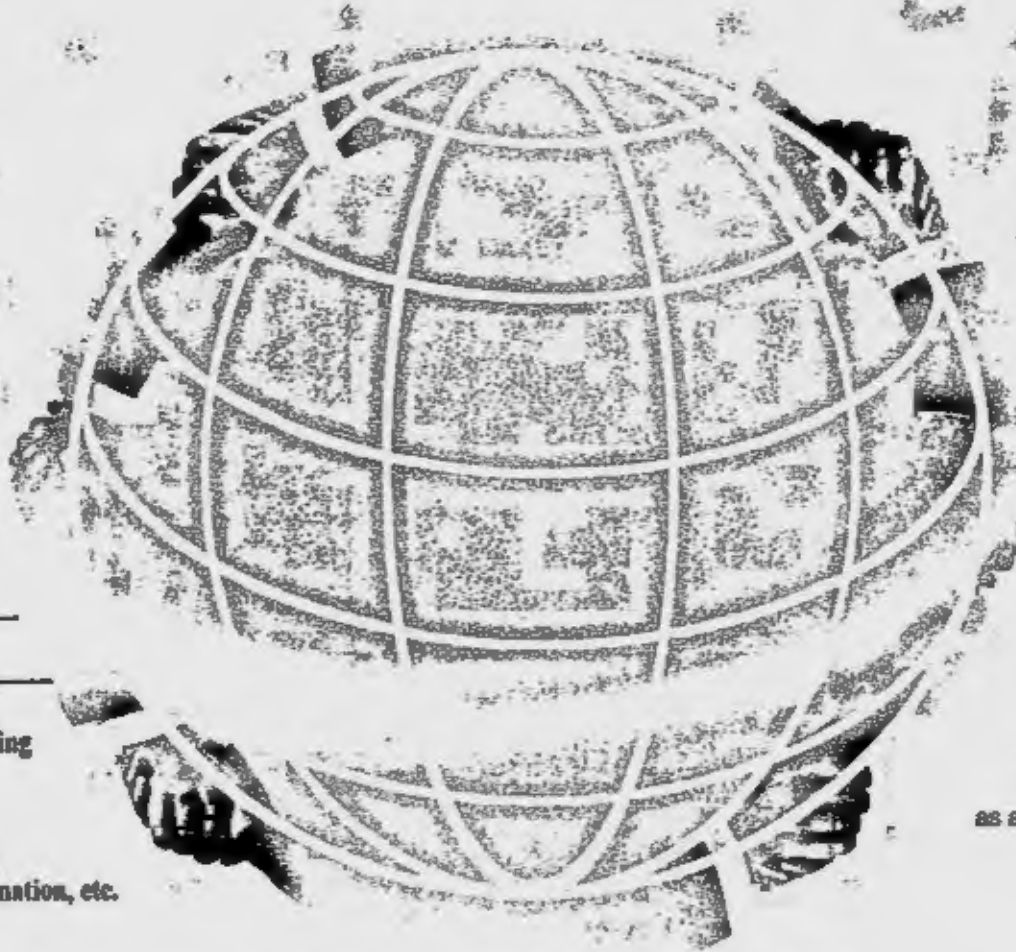
Towards a Sustainable Future,

this one day forum facilitates a discussion among the business experts and consultants, both local and foreign, on the strategies, mechanisms and structures that will promote business partnering among participants focusing on business opportunities and prospects in the areas of agribusiness, tourism, invention, information and communication technology, merchandise exports and medical services.

Fees per Participant:
Php1,850.00 inclusive of meals and seminar materials

Topics include:

- Business Partnering Towards a Sustainable Future
- Maximizing Profitability Through Business Partnering
- Developing Successful Partnership in the Local and International Markets
- Developing Partnership for E-Business highlighting Call Center Operation, Medical Transcription, Animation, etc.
- Medical Services: Fastest Growing Small Business per Fortune Small Business 100
- Revolutionizing Your Business into a Partnering Powerhouse
- The Role of Continuing Education in Business Partnering
- Plus! An Investment Opportunity Presentation by CIDA Pearl2 Investment Promotion Centers



For details, visit or call the PHILSMED Secretariat at:
#1 Sta. Escolastica Street corner Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 PHILIPPINES
BizOps'05 Hotline - (632) 832 0896; Telefax: (632) 834 2993 • 834 2994
Email: philsmmed@ph.inlar.net; betterpeople@pacific.net.ph
To secure registration form, log on to: <http://www.businessopportunities.com.ph>

Business Opportunity Fair

November 5-7, 2004 (9:00am - 6:00pm)

A Reverse Trade Fair that gathers various companies looking for sub-contractors, manufacturers and other start-up companies, franchises, venture capitalists, financing and consultancy companies and other firms providing allied services that offer opportunities to find business partners and alliances.

Fees per Exhibitor: Php14,500 for a 2.4m x 3m booth
Php19,500 for a 3.65 x 3.65m booth

Business Excellence Awards for SMEs

November 5, 2004 (6:00pm)

An award-giving activity that gives due recognition to the excellent performance of an SME. The award is the highest recognition given to SMEs for Business Excellence and Leadership. Over-all business efficiency, the impact they create in the economy and their contribution to the business landscape of a particular area or the country as a whole are the major considerations in selecting the winners.

The Market Place

November 6-7, 2004 (9:00am - 6:00pm)

A two-day fun-filled shopping experience featuring various companies and entrepreneurs selling gifts, toys, housewares, electronics, garments and fashion accessories, home furnishings, books, food and other novelty items. Fees per Table Display: Php8,000 for a 3sqm. area.

Organized by: **PHILSMED**
Philippine Small & Medium Business Development Foundation, Inc.

Co-Organized by:

- Department of Trade and Industry
- Department of Tourism
- Department of Science and Technology
- Department of Agriculture
- Productivity Development Center
- Development Academy of the Philippines
- Asian Productivity Office (APO-Japan)
- Business Traveller Asia-Pacific • Business Traveller China
- CIDA Pearl2
- ComputerWorld Philippines • Enterprise Magazine
- Globe • Innove
- LandBank of the Philippines
- Philippine Daily Inquirer
- Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation (SBGFC)

REGISTRATION/RESERVATION FORM

TO: THE FORUM and FAIR COORDINATOR (Telefax: (632) 8343993 to 94)
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- ☐ I want to join the Business Opportunity Forum
☐ I want to Exhibit at the Business Opportunity Fair
☐ I am interested in the Business Excellence Award
☐ I want to Sell My Products at The Market Place
☐ I want to be a Sponsor

Signature: _____

Date: _____

- 10% Early Bird Discount for registration paid before Sep30 2004
- 10% Group Discount (at least 7 participants from the same company)
- Special rate (Php950.00 for the BizOps Forum) for members of the

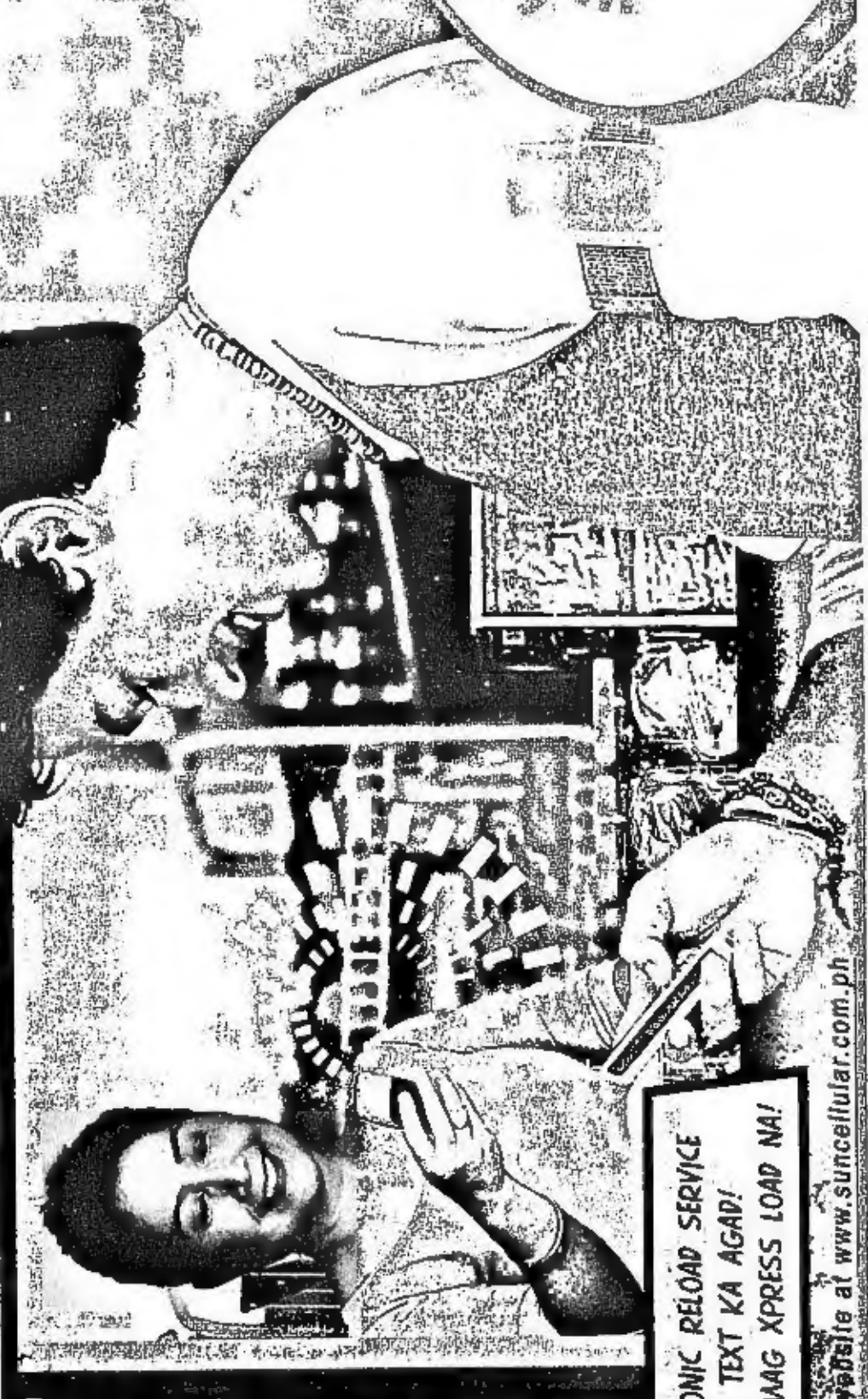
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